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ABSTRACT

These two manuals provide instructors and participants with a curriculum to train paraeducators to provide supportive services to students with challenging behaviors in inclusive classroom settings. The requires approximately 12 hours of instruction and 10 hours of practicum and can be offered in a variety of formats (intensively or over a number of weeks) and does not require outside trainers. The instructor's manual contains introductory material, suggestions for using the manual, and four units of instruction. Each unit contains an instructor's overview (with a brief description, unit objectives, and lists of readings and materials), an agenda, a lesson plan, a review quiz and key, and overhead masters. For each unit, the participant's manual provides a participant's overview, required readings (full-text), activity sheets, the review quiz, a cooperating teacher practicum summary, and a unit evaluation form. The curriculum's four units address the following topics: (1) understanding student behavior; (2) gathering information about challenging behaviors; (3) preventing challenging behaviors and teaching replacement behaviors; and (4) responding to challenging behaviors. Attachments include a list of practicum requirements and sample forms, including a participant registration form, a cooperating teacher responsibility form, instructor evaluation forms, and a certificate of completion. (Individual sections contain references.) (DB)

ED 471 800

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Field Test Version 2.0

Instructor's Manual [and] Participant's Manual

Linda Backus
Eileen CichoskiKelly

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Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors

— A Paraeducator Curriculum —

Instructor's Manual

Linda Backus
Eileen CichoskiKelly

Field Test Version 2.0 June 2001 Feedback is requested

For updated course information and ideas, check:

www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep

(look under "Summaries of Project's Training Materials")

All readings included in the companion *Participant's Manual* for this course, *Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum,* have been reprinted with the written permission of the copyright holder.

IDEAs that Work
U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

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Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Instructor's Manual

Note: All course readings are in a separate Participant's Manual.

Linda Backus
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Center on Disability and Community Inclusion
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Introduction

Overall Purpose of the Curriculum

Student behavior is a primary concern of most personnel who work in education. A national survey of paraeducator training needs reported that classroom teachers, special educators, and paraeducators identified addressing student behavior as a significant challenge (CichoskiKelly, Giangreco, Backus & Tucker, 1998). This curriculum was developed with the recognition that paraeducators interact with students on a day-to-day basis in many school environments. Their participation as members of educational teams is invaluable, and their involvement in various aspects of supporting students with challenging behaviors is often crucial. Yet, too often, they find themselves struggling for answers and wanting more strategies for how to be more effective at preventing and responding to behavioral challenges.

From the revolutionary ideas drawn from applied behavior analysis to the current multifaceted approaches termed *positive behavior supports*, new and more effective strategies have been developed to prevent, replace, and respond to challenging behaviors.

Although the importance of addressing paraprofessional training has long been recognized, this aspect of education for students with disabilities has received additional attention in the field because of new legislation. The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997* (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) requires that state education agencies "establish and maintain standards" to ensure that paraprofessionals who assist in the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities are appropriately and adequately prepared, "trained, and supervised in accordance with State law, regulations, or written policy" [20 U.S.C. 1412 § 612(15)]. In other words, IDEA requires states to ensure that "qualified personnel" are available to assist in educating students who have disabilities; this includes paraprofessionals, hereafter referred to as paraeducators. IDEA also requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to ensure that all personnel working with students with disabilities are "appropriately and adequately prepared" [20 U.S.C. 1412 § 613 (a) (3)].

In an effort to address certain aspects of this requirement, this curriculum provides training content, formats, and a framework to ensure that paraeducators have the basic knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the education of students with disabilities in general educational settings. Paraeducators certainly have important input into the process and are often responsible for modeling and reinforcing new skills, implementing prevention strategies, and attending to the social and educational needs of students. These are important factors to consider in addressing behavior; however, it should not be the responsibility of paraeducators, singularly or primarily, to be responsible for addressing challenging behaviors of students. The professional staff, in collaboration with the family, is responsible for decision making and planning to address significant behavioral challenges.

In addition to the legal impetus for increased focus on paraeducator training, our understanding of behavior has changed significantly over the past 30 years. From the revolutionary ideas drawn from applied behavior analysis (Baer, Wolfe & Risley, 1968) to the current multifaceted approaches termed "positive behavior supports" (Carr, Horner, Turnbull et al., 1999; O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Story & Sprague, 1997), new and more effective strategies have been developed to prevent, replace, and respond to challenging behaviors. The concepts of positive behavior supports and inclusive education (McGregor & Vogelsberg, 1998), community-based and "wraparound" approaches (Burchard & Clark, 1990) have allowed students to succeed within general education environments who might previously have had less than successful educational experiences. But, in order for these new approaches to be effective, teams, including paraeducators, need to know how to use them.

This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the prerequisite entry-level training course *Paraeducator Entry-Level Training for Supporting Students with Disabilities*. Effective approaches to supporting students who may have challenging behavior are all grounded in a framework of collaboration among professionals, students, and family members; the development of informal supports; family and cultural sensitivity; and the roles of paraeducators and other qualified professionals.

This curriculum is designed to inform paraeducators who work with a wide range of students with disabilities, including students with emotional disturbances. It is important to remember that each student is unique and that no one approach works for all students. This curriculum provides some general guidelines that will help teams in their collaborative planning process.

Philosophical Foundation for This Training

Creating inclusive classrooms for students with disabilities requires personnel, including paraeducators, to acquire skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge that explicitly pertain to the context of general education. Inclusive settings require personnel to take on a variety of new roles as well as to collaborate and communicate among various professionals, including general educators. Paraeducators in inclusive settings need to know how to promote peer interaction and positive interdependence between students with and without disabilities. They need to develop competence in working with diverse groups of students who exhibit varied learning styles within general education settings and who are pursuing differing, individually appropriate, learning outcomes within the same classroom activities. They need to understand and respond to challenging behavior in effective, positive, and proactive ways. Many paraeducators feel ill-prepared to handle the content, social dynamics, and behavioral challenges that need to be addressed within general education classrooms. Similarly, many classroom teachers have received minimal, training, if any, in how to mentor paraeducators.

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum is based on a number of assumptions. We believe that challenging behaviors (indeed, all behaviors) are related to context and serve a function for the student. We recognize that effective interventions are based on a thorough understanding of the student and the social, environmental, and personal influences on his or her behavior, and we believe that a strength-based approach that includes preferences, interests and capacities has the most potential to bring about positive behavior change. Behavior support planning ideally should take place collaboratively within the context of a team of individuals who provide support for the student. It is a proactive approach that focuses on prevention and teaching of replacement behaviors.

This curriculum emphasizes the unique nature of the paraeducator's *"assistance"* in implementing instruction designed by teachers, special educators, and related service providers. We believe that assessment, curricular design and adaptation, and primary instruction are roles of certified educators, special educators, and related service personnel. Therefore, another tenet of our philosophy is that we *do not expect a paraeducator to be the exclusive or primary teacher for students with a disability label.* Students with disabilities deserve to be educated by qualified professionals in their neighborhood schools, just like students without disabilities. At the same time, we recognize that paraeducators play a vital support role in many classrooms—their work should be recognized and appreciated. We believe it is important for roles to be clearly defined and for paraeducators to learn the skills most necessary to contribute to a positive, supportive inclusive educational experience for children and youth without usurping or substituting for the role of classroom teacher or special educator.

In addition, we recognize the wide array of roles and responsibilities that paraeducators are being asked to fulfill and we question whether they can be expected to meet this ever expanding set of demands without adequate training, support, or compensation. At times paraeducators are unfairly expected to do the work of teachers–in such cases we consider whether training is really the answer or whether other models of service delivery (e.g., hiring more qualified teachers; differentiating teacher roles) may be more appropriate (Giangreco, Broer, & Edelman, 1999). We have also been guided by the principles presented in the article, "Developing a Shared Understanding: Paraeducator Supports for Students with Disabilities in General Education" (Giangreco et al., 1999).

Intended Audience

This curriculum is intended for use by paraeducators who work with students with disabilities in general education and community settings who have behavioral challenges. It is meant to address the initial training needs of paraeducators working with students across the age span and is generically applicable for those working with students who have various types of disabilities. The curriculum is primarily geared toward use in general education schools and classrooms, although the content is also applicable to community or employment settings where people with disabilities are included with people who do not have disabilities. The required readings and varied formats contribute to its potential use in urban, suburban, rural, and remote areas. But, like any training program, it should be tailored to meet local conditions. Because this program is designed for national dissemination, specific state and local regulations, policies, and procedures are not included. The instructor or sponsoring agency should supplement this program with any necessary information specific to local situations.

Formats of Training

The needs of school districts to train paraeducators vary. Therefore, training formats must be flexible. The content in this curriculum is designed to be offered in different formats to meet differing needs. Each format includes a mechanism for evaluation and a practicum component. Each can also be adapted for continuing education or university credit.

Course Format

The traditional course format includes required readings and materials for a trainer, face-to-face sessions with participants, written materials and traditional methods of interaction (e.g., group discussions, presentations, group and individual activities). This format can be provided in various ways. It can be delivered regionally or within a single district or school. It can be delivered in an intensive (e.g., full-week) format or spread over a number of weeks. The program is not dependent on outside trainers and is appropriate for use by qualified school personnel (e.g., special educators, school psychologists, and staff development specialists) who have skills related to supporting students with challenging behaviors.

Though we have designed all our courses to be completed in 12 to 18 hours of instruction and 10 to 12 hours of practicum, you may decide to extend these times to add depth to the experience. You may add time for involving guest instructors in your class such as parents who have children with disabilities, self-advocates or professionals who have special expertise related to the unit of study. This option can be offered to groups ranging from 5 to 25 participants. Depending on the delivery format selected, local trainers may be asked to do this training within the context of their existing job responsibilities or be compensated for additional time spent beyond their contracted duties.

Formats Relying on Technology

Project staff are exploring the use of technology (e.g. interactive video, internet courses, and CD-ROM) as an option for offering courses to paraeducators who lack access to traditional courses because of issues such as scheduling conflicts or transportation barriers. As information becomes available about these options it will be posted on our web site: http://www. uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep/

Basis for the Course

A number of foundational sources of information informed the development of this curriculum. They include:

- a review and summary of existing paraeducator training curricula;
- a review of published paraeducator literature from 1990 to 1999 (both data based and non-data based)
- a review of paraeducator Dissertation Abstracts from 1992 to 1999;
- a national survey of perceived training needs and priorities for paraeducators and their mentors that was completed by a variety of stakeholder groups (e.g., parents, paraeducators, special educators, classroom teachers, related services providers, state education staff, school administrators);
- input from a National Advisory Council made up of paraeducators, principals, students, parents, and state education personnel; and
- a review of the positive behavioral support literature and input from practitioners in the field.

Course Content and Organization

This "mini-course" is part of a series of courses for training paraeducators. Mini-courses follow a six unit prerequisite course entitled *Paraeducator Entry-Level Training for Supporting Students with Disabilities.* This course is designed to be completed in the following four, 3-hour classes:

Unit 1	Understanding Student Behavior
Unit 2	Gathering Information About Challenging Behavior
Unit 3	Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors
Unit 4	Responding to Challenging Behavior

Practicum Requirements

Ten hours of practicum activities are included in the mini-course and are appropriate for implementation within a general education setting. The practicum requires that paraeducators conduct these activities under the direction of an educator willing to support the participant and provide feedback on the activities. Practicum activities and evaluation forms are included as part of the training package. Participants also have the option of negotiating alternative practicum requirements with their cooperating teacher.

Other Content Training for Paraeducators

Currently, two more mini-courses are being developed. Each consists of 12 hours of classroom instruction and 10 hours of practicum.

Mini-Course 2	Supporting Students with Low Incidence Disabilities
Mini-Course 3	Implementing and Monitoring Teacher-Planned Instruction

Check our web site: http://www. uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep/ for information on the status of these courses and for links to courses offered online by other organizations on other important topics such as assistive technology and literacy.

Limitations of This Training Series

Our experience tells us that when people hear about a new training program for paraeducators, they become very interested because the need is obvious and extensive. While this and other training programs can certainly assist schools in developing a more qualified work force, they are not like magic wands that once passed over them will transform untrained assistants into highly competent teachers. In fact, this curriculum is intentionally not designed to prepare paraeducators to become teachers, or to teach paraeducators how to engage in planning that is the responsibility of qualified professionals. Likewise, it is not intended to substitute for an individual district's ongoing orientation, on-the-job training, and supervision of paraeducators. It is merely one piece of the paraeducator puzzle.

No training program will solve all the problems related to service delivery, instruction, classroom management, and other important issues affecting student learning. This training program, like many programs, is brief and therefore focuses on the most essential learning outcomes needed by paraeducators. It does not replace local training in specific skills, for specific settings (e.g., a specific reading or mathematics program; information uniquely associated with individual students).

In addition, it does not substitute for the daily and ongoing on-the-job support and mentoring that can be provided only by local school personnel.

Additional Training Resources

If you want to go further in depth, supplemental resources are listed at the end of each unit. These include references for books and articles, videos, and web addresses of interest. Other training resources are also listed at this project's web site: http://www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep/. This site also lists important updates to the curriculum. These include new activities, corrections, and more recent information useful for instruction.

Or you may visit our companion web site at:
http://www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/parasupport/

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Make It Your Own!

In offering these training materials for your use, we have provided a level of detail so that you can have all that is necessary to offer a basic course (e.g., agendas with timelines, readings, activities, overhead masters, and lists of supplemental resources). At the same time, we recognize that some of you may be experienced instructors who may not need the level of detail we have provided. In such situations we encourage you to make adjustments that make sense to you.

Bringing chocolate to the first class can't hurt!

We strongly encourage you to bring your own style of teaching to this course. Feel free to modify or substitute activities to match the objectives. Feel free to add readings that would improve the content. Insert your favorite stories, cartoons, or other training materials. Bringing chocolate to the first class can't hurt!

If your experience is anything like ours, you'll find yourself adding your own personal touches and making various adjustments in preparation for class and during class. Often the adjustments you make will depend on the number of participants and the dynamics of the group. For example, sometimes you may decide that activities designed to be done in small groups are more appropriate for large groups. Sometimes the length of time you devote to an activity may be shortened or extended. You will find yourself assisting participants in making connections between the course content and what you are learning about their schools and classrooms. This likely will lead to discussion of important topics that are beyond the scope of a unit's objectives. Hopefully, this will help make the course more relevant and dynamic.

The main point is to take the framework offered in these materials and make it your own!

Good luck!

How to Use this Instructor's Manual

This manual includes all of the information an instructor needs to offer, prepare, deliver, and evaluate the mini-course *Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum*. The first step recommended is to become familiar with the manual. This section is designed to facilitate that process. It provides information in chronological order; certain items may not be applicable to all instructors.

How to Offer the Training

1. **Decide whether there is a need to offer the course:**
   - Need can be determined by the school administration for individual schools or by state or local agency personnel or college or university departments. It can be determined by reviewing state training needs (e.g., State Department Comprehensive System of Personnel Development data, data collected by state paraeducator advocacy organizations) and/or local training needs (observations or surveys conducted by school districts to identify paraeducator training needs).

2. **Decide on the format for offering the course:**
   - The next consideration is for the school administration, local, or state agencies or college and university personnel to determine (based on identified needs) whether the course will be available to participants through "open enrollment" or "in-house."
   - Open enrollment courses may be delivered by school districts (that are open to paraeducators from other schools), colleges and universities, or agencies (e.g., State Department of Education) that are interested in offering training which is open to the public.
   - In-house courses will generally be offered by a school district that is interested in training its paraeducator staff.

3. **Identify the instructor:**
   - The course is designed so that a *novice instructor,* though one knowledgeable about supporting students with challenging behaviors, could deliver the course. The course also can be taught by instructors who are beyond the novice level.
   - The instructor should be familiar with the work of paraeducators and may be a professional such as a classroom teacher, special educator, administrator, consultant, or Department of Education staff member. Paraeducators, parents, or others who have completed entry-level paraeducator training may serve as co-instructors. People with disabilities and parents of students with disabilities

may serve as guest instructors or as co-instructors who can talk about their own experiences with paraeducators.
- For those courses that are offered in-house, an instructor who works in that setting would be ideal for providing on-site support to paraeducators and their cooperating teachers. If the instructor is not a member of the school staff, he/she should be familiar with the school setting and any in-house paraeducator policies.
- Once the instructor is identified, he/she should be given the Instructor's Manual and the Participant's Manual for the course.

4. **Decide if the course should be offered for credit and determine the cost for participants:**
   - The course is designed to be offered as noncredit with a certificate of completion awarded to participants who complete course requirements. It may be necessary to consider whether participants will need to pay tuition if there is a cost for the instructor or other fees (e.g., materials, classroom space). In some cases, the instructor may be a member of the school district who teaches the course as part of his/her job responsibilities. In other cases, schools may pay in-house instructors for work beyond their contracted duties. In such cases, the course may be offered to participants at no cost.
   - Arrangements can be made with local colleges and universities to offer the course for credit (the course is designed as the equivalent of a one-credit course). Courses offered for credit may also require participants to pay tuition. In such cases, arrangements must be made with the college or university to determine tuition rates.

5. **Schedule the course: The schedule for the course will depend on several factors, including:**
   - the instructor's availability and schedule (you may wish to ask the instructor about best training dates, times, and locations);
   - the availability of participants (you may wish to survey potential participants for best training dates, times, and locations); and
   - the availability of training sites (a central location is recommended for in-house courses; however, location may be determined by the college or university for open-enrollment courses).
   - Paraeducator considerations for in-house courses: To acknowledge the role of the paraeducator, the school may offer the course (or part of the course) during the school day. Attending the course then becomes a part of the paraeducator's responsibilities. Schools may also offer paraeducators stipends or compensation for their time beyond scheduled work hours to attend the course.
   - The schedule should include confirmed dates, times, and locations for all course classes.

6. **Advertise the course:**
   - Once the schedule has been determined, the course should be advertised to prospective participants.
   - The advertisement should contain information regarding the course schedule, course content, and practicum requirements, as well as information about how to register and where registration forms can be obtained.
   - The advertisement may be a brochure, flier or e-mail message.
   - In-house: Distribute the advertisement to school principals, special education coordinators, special educators, classroom teachers, and paraeducators.
   - Open enrollment: Distribute the advertisement to teacher organizations, paraeducator organizations, disability groups, special education coordinators, paraeducators, parent-teacher organizations, local newspapers, and others.
   - Arrangements should also be made to advertise in college and university course catalogues and bulletins if the course is offered for credit.

7. **Register participants:**
   - Copy and distribute registration forms (found in the *Forms* section of the Instructor's Manual) to participants. These include the Participant Registration Form, which includes the Cooperating Teacher Statement of Commitment, and the Cooperating Teacher Responsibility Form. Forms have blanks to be filled in so that the instructor can individualize them.
   - Participants complete the registration forms for the course and submit them to the instructor.
   - Upon receipt, review the registration information for any special testing or instructional accommodations needed and keep forms in a confidential place.
   - Once participant's registration forms are received, send each participant a Participant Course Information sheet, which lists all pertinent information such as class dates, times, and locations and the address to order the Participant's Manual from the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) at:

     NCRTM
     Oklahoma State University
     5202 Richmond Hill Drive
     Stillwater, OK 74078-4080
     800-223-5219
     405-624-7650
     Fax: 405-624-0695
     www.nchrtm.okstate.edu

     Order # 650.050B

- For courses offered in-house, school districts may wish to pre-order participant materials.
- For courses offered at colleges and universities, bulk orders may be made through the college bookstore.

Participant Registration Process

Instructor | **Participant**

Advertise course →

Participant requests registration form ↙

Registration materials, including the Participant Registration Form, Cooperating Teacher Responsibility Form, and Practicum Requirements, are supplied to participant. →

Participant fills out registration and returns it to instructor or designated person. ↙

When the participant's registration is received, Participant Course Information sheet is sent to participant. →

Participant receives Participant Course Information sheet and follows instructions to obtain the Participant's Manual (Unit 1 readings should be read prior to the first class.) ↙

Class begins!

Note: Additional course registration procedures may be required if the course is offered for college credit.

How to Use the Instructional Units

The curriculum is divided into four instructional units, and each unit contains:

- an overview
- an agenda
- a lesson plan
- a *Knowledge Review* and key
- overhead masters

1. **How to use the overviews:**
   The overviews should be used to help prepare for the instruction of a specific unit by outlining:
   - a brief description of the unit
   - the number of hours it should take
   - the unit objectives, identified as knowledge (K) or skill (S) objectives
   - materials needed
   - instructor preparation needed (e.g., prepare materials and overhead masters)
   - participant preparation needed (e.g., read required readings)
   - practicum requirements
   - evaluation of participant learning
   - suggested supplemental resources provided for participants who wish to have more information than that provided in the required readings.
   - If the course is offered for credit, additional criteria such as course evaluations may need to be considered.

2. **How to use the agendas:**
   - The agendas are included in the Instructor's Manual only.
   - The agendas should be used to organize and plan time requirements for delivery of unit content and activities.
   - The agenda should be kept on hand during class as a reminder of the schedule.
   - The agendas may be copied prior to class and distributed to participants at the beginning of each class as an organizer.

3. **How to use the lesson plans:**
   - The Instructor's Manual (only) includes lessons for each unit.
   - The lessons are guides for the class and should be reviewed prior to each class.
   - The lesson plan and sequence are cross-referenced to the agenda for each unit (each agenda item is noted with a stylized letter **A**).
   - The lessons contain various icons that should be used to help you visually recognize different parts of the lesson. The icons signal the following:

Note to the Instructor: Signals the instructor that there are special directions that should be reviewed prior to class and used during class as a reminder.

Activity: Signals the instructor to begin a class activity.

Refer to Participant's Manual: Signals the instructor to refer the participants to materials in their Participant's Manual (e.g., required readings).

Show Overhead: Signals the instructor to show an overhead during the class.

BREAK: Signals the instructor to have a class break.

Discussion Questions: Signals the instructor to begin a class discussion.

Read Aloud: Signals the instructor to read information to the class.

Knowledge Review: Signals the instructor to give participants the *Knowledge Review*.

- The lessons are designed to be taught according to the sequence presented.
- Lessons include review of the required readings through specific activities and discussion questions (**the required readings are contained in the Participant's Manual only**).
- The instructor may wish to substitute or supplement selected required readings with more contemporary or appropriate readings that reflect unit objectives. The readings can be individualized as needed.
- The "activity sheets" referred to in the lesson plan are located in the corresponding units of the Participant's Manual.
- The Participant's Manual contains some required readings that are not covered in class.
- The instructor may supplement or substitute activities or discussion questions as appropriate.
- Time frames for each activity and discussion are given in the lesson as well as on the agenda.
- Class time should be monitored to ensure that all planned activities will be completed.
- A participant who misses a class must meet with the instructor to be given work that will take the place of the in-class activities missed that reflects mastery of unit knowledge objectives. The Certificate of Completion can be issued only to participants who complete the curriculum requirements, which include completion of all in-class activities.
- All participants should be made aware that attendance in class is a requirement for obtaining a Certificate of Completion, and that any participant who misses a class must arrange to meet with the instructor to schedule makeup assignments.

4. **How to use the Participant's Manual in class:**
   - The instructor will need both the Instructor's Manual and the Participant's Manual for class.
   - The instructor should become familiar with the Participant's Manual which is divided into four units and contains the required readings for each unit, activity sheets needed to complete in-class activities, *Knowledge Reviews,* and Unit Evaluation forms.
   - Prior to each class, copy the *Knowledge Review* and Unit Evaluation forms to distribute and collect from participants.
   - Bring a Participant's Manual to each class and remind participants to do the same.

5. **How to use the Unit and Instructor Evaluation forms:**
    - Gather all Unit Evaluation forms from students and review them for suggestions that may lead to revisions of future course offerings.
    - Complete your own Instructor Evaluation Form when you finish teaching each unit. Use these to modify the units as needed.

6. **How to use the practicum requirement checklists:**
    - Review the practicum requirements at the **end of each class** for that unit and ensure that all participants understand the requirements.
    - Encourage participants to complete the practicum requirements in a time frame that fits their work schedule; however, *all* practicum requirements must be completed in the time frame negotiated by the instructor and the class.
    - Because some participants may complete the practicum requirement after the course ends, they must work with their cooperating teachers on a plan for their completion.
    - Participants who feel that certain practicum requirements are not appropriate for their school site may negotiate a more suitable requirement with their cooperating teachers.
    - To negotiate a new requirement, the participant must receive written approval from the class instructor. This may be accomplished by submitting a negotiated requirement in writing and receiving written approval from the cooperating teacher and the instructor.
    - The cooperating teachers should initial each skill "checked" as completed and sign the practicum requirement sheet.
    - Participants are responsible for turning in the completed practicum checklists to the instructor at the end of class within the time frame established by the instructor.

7. **How to issue the Certificate of Completion:**
    - When a participant has completed the course and the practicum requirements, the instructor may issue a Certificate of Completion (located in the *Forms* section at the end of this Instructor's Manual).
    - Completion of course work means attending all classes, participating in class activities, completing the *Knowledge Review* for each unit, and completing all practicum requirements.
    - The instructor may issue a Certificate of Completion to participants by mail if they complete the practicum requirements after the classes have been completed.

Unit 1:

Understanding Student Behavior

Instructor's Overview

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

Brief Description of Unit

This unit provides information about student behavior, including factors that affect it and how it can be changed in positive, productive ways. The concept of "positive behavior supports" for students with challenging behavior is introduced. Characteristics of students with specific behavioral or emotional challenges (e.g., externalizing and internalizing behaviors) are briefly described. Paraeducators' roles regarding student behavior are discussed within the context of their legal and ethical responsibilities.

Hours of Instruction

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.)

1. Paraeducators will understand types of behavior challenges and how behavior affects a student's education. (K)
2. Paraeducators will learn about positive behavior supports and the function(s) of behavior for students with challenging behavior. (K)
3. Paraeducators will understand their role(s) when working with children with challenging behaviors. (K)
4. Paraeducators will demonstrate how their role(s) can support students with challenging behaviors. (S)

Preparing For and Implementing the Unit

Required Readings (located only in the Participant's Manual):

Backus, L. (2000). *Understanding student behavior.* (Unpublished manuscript) Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Beach Center on Families and Disability (1998). The story of Samantha in *Success stories: Positive behavioral support in action.* (pp. 8-11). University of Kansas: Author.

Instructor Materials:
- overhead projector & screen
- Unit 1 overhead (must be copied onto transparencies)
- flip charts & markers
- nametags
- Knowledge Review (Unit 1): enough copies for all participants in the class.

Instructor Preparation for Unit 1:
- Obtain a list of students registered for the class.
- Read the required readings (located only in the Participant's Manual) prior to the class
- Gather all instructor materials.
- Consider the physical arrangement of the classroom to facilitate class activities.
- Review the practicum requirements for Unit 1.

Participant Preparation for Unit 1:
- Read the required readings **prior to the class.**
- Based on required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class.
- Bring writing materials for notetaking and activities to class.
- Review practicum requirements for Unit 1.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Instructor Implementation of Unit 1:
The unit includes an agenda with timelines, a lesson plan, required readings, a *Knowledge Review,* and practicum requirements to be completed in the educational setting. The agenda is located at the beginning of each unit. The activities are interspersed within the lesson plan. The *Knowledge Review* is located at the end of each unit.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed and the skills to be observed can be found at the end of this manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher and approved by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate familiarity with required readings, participants may review quiz questions prior to completing the readings. They will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Bambara, L.M. & Knoster, T. (1998). Designing positive behavior support plans. *Innovations, (13)*. Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

Janney, R. & Snell, M. (2000). *Behavior support: Teachers' guides to inclusive practices.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Lovett, H. (1997). *Learning to listen: Positive approaches and people with difficult behavior.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Web Sites

Children, Youth and Families Educational Resource Network:
http://www.cyfernet.org/profdata/

Council for Exceptional Children:
http://www.cec.sped.org/

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities:
http://www.nichcy.org

Parent-Teacher Associations:
http://www.pta.org/programs/sfgrdtoc.htm

Perspectives on Emotional and Behavioral Disorders:
http://www.coe.missouri.edu/~vrcbd

Tri-state Consortium on Positive Behavior Supports:
http://www.positiveapproaches.org

Video

Samantha: A story about positive behavioral support. [Video] Center on Human Development and Disability. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.

Agenda

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior (3 hours)

	Agenda item	Time
A1.	Introductions	15 min.
	Introductory Activity (10 min.) Confidentiality Activity (5 min.)	
A2.	Characteristics of Behavioral Disabilities	30 min.
	Introduce Objective and Types of Challenging Behaviors (6 min.) Types of Challenging Behaviors Activity (24 min.)	
A3.	Functions of Behavior	30 min.
	Introduce Objective (6 min.) Functions of Behavior Role-Play Activity (24 min.)	
A4.	Positive Behavior Supports	30 min.
	Overheads & Discussion	
A5.	BREAK	15 min.
A6.	Identifying Positive Supports Activity (Samantha Story)	30 min.
A7.	Knowledge Review	20 min.
A8.	Evaluation, Practicum, and Preparation for the Next Class	10 min.

A1 INTRODUCTIONS (15 min.)

Introductory Activity (10 min.)

1. Introduce yourself (name and role as instructor).
2. Pass out nametags to participants and ask them to write their names on them.
3. Introduce the activity by telling participants that its purpose is to help them to get to know one another. This is important because participants will be members of various working groups.

Show Overhead (OH B1-1)

What school district are you from?

What grade(s) do you work in?

What is your favorite hobby?

What is one skill you hope to learn in the course?

B1-1

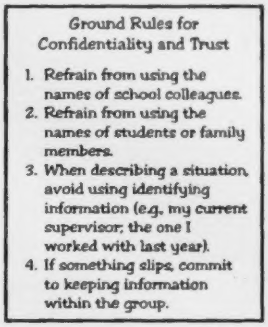
4. Divide participants into pairs. If there is an odd number, you can pair with a participant or a group of three can be formed.
5. Ask participants to predict how their partner would answer the questions on the overhead. One partner volunteers to begin making predictions. Once the predictions are made, the other partner should give the correct answers. The process repeats with the partners switching roles. Pairs should be given 5 minutes to complete this process.
6. Ask partners to introduce each other to the group by answering the questions on the overhead using the correct answers. If you have paired off for this activity, he/she may begin the activity to model the introduction. Otherwise, simply ask for a volunteer or ask for someone to begin. Tell participants that they have only 30 seconds to introduce their partner.

Confidentiality Activity (5 min.)

Note to the Instructor

To establish trust among participants to share openly, it is important to maintain the confidentiality of students and paraeducator, teacher, and special educator colleagues.

Show Overhead (OH B1-2)



Ground Rules for Confidentiality and Trust

1. Refrain from using the names of school colleagues.
2. Refrain from using the names of students or family members.
3. When describing a situation, avoid using identifying information (e.g., my current supervisor; the one I worked with last year).
4. If something slips, commit to keeping information within the group.

B1-2

Read Aloud

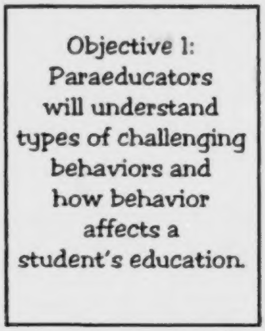
Throughout this class the success of the experience will be dependent, in part, upon open and honest sharing of ideas among group members. Therefore, it is vital that we establish some ground rules for confidentiality that will help members feel comfortable sharing. Let's review these initial ground rules (on the overhead) as a group and then decide if we need to modify or add to them, so that people are comfortable sharing while maintaining confidentiality.

Note to the Instructor

Review overhead points and reach group agreement about confidentiality norms. Encourage people to talk about their experiences in hypothetical terms (even though they may not be hypothetical).

A2 CHARACTERISTICS OF BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES (30 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B 1-3)



Objective 1:
Paraeducators
will understand
types of challenging
behaviors and
how behavior
affects a
student's education.

B1-3

Read Aloud

Objective 1: *Paraeducators will understand types of challenging behaviors and how behavior affects a student's education.*

Types of Challenging Behaviors Activity (24 min.)

1. Divide the participants into four small groups. Group them so that paraeducators who work with students of different age ranges are together (e.g., a paraeducator working in a second grade class is grouped with a paraeducator working in a tenth grade class). The descriptions provided in the Participant's Manual represent the following types of challenging behaviors:
    - attention problems
    - externalizing behaviors
    - internal emotional states
    - developmental disabilities (e.g., autism)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 1, Activity Sheet: Challenging Behavior Descriptions

2. Assign each group one Challenging Behavior Description in the Participant's Manual (e.g., group one takes behavior description number one).

Challenging Behavior Descriptions (with key):

*(The following descriptions represent **general categories** of behavioral or emotional challenges. They are not representative of specific diagnoses).*

1. Karl is in third grade. He enjoys school and spends an inordinate amount of time talking about his Pokemon cards. When he talks he seems to jabber and takes over the conversation, jumping from one subject to another. When he does this, the other children quickly move on to someone else. Because he is so impulsive, he often loses track of his cards and leaves them at home or on the bus. He never quite fits in with the other children, and this frustrates and angers him. Karl often gets into trouble for not being able to stand still in line and for turning in messy papers. In math class he is quite bright, but he blurts out the answers without thinking. He gets poor grades because he always loses his homework or leaves it in his cubby. **(Attention Problems)**

2. Matthew is in eighth grade and he always comes to school with a scowl on his face. He can be very prickly in his social studies class, especially in his cooperative group because he thinks nothing anyone ever does is good enough. He often teases other students and annoys the teacher when students are supposed to be working. Then when the group doesn't get its work done, he blames everyone else. He has a short trigger and consequently winds up fighting at lunchtime and in the hallways. Teachers avoid confronting him on his negative behavior, because they know he'll explode at them and things will surely escalate out of control. He's spent so much time in the planning room that he's had to drop back one year in his mathematics book. When anyone tries to compliment him, he makes a sarcastic or vulgar remark. When he gets a poor grade, he destroys his paper and slams doors. Everyone stays away from Matthew. **(Externalizing Behaviors)**

3. Jasmine is in fourth grade. She tries to be perfect in everything she does. When she gets dressed for school in the morning, there is never an outfit that looks just right. She's frequently late to school and arrives in tears because of some problem with her outfit. When she goes to first period reading class, she refuses to read aloud – or if she does, she does it in a whisper. When she writes in her journal, she writes only what the teacher tells her to write. Her letters are perfectly aligned, but she never shares any of her thoughts. Jasmine avoids trying out new things in math class or taking any risks. If she doesn't know the "right" answer she leaves the questions blank, resulting in many lower grades. Sometimes it takes her three hours to complete one spelling assignment because she is afraid to make a mistake. When she's at school, she always sits at the same table, eats the same food, and avoids initiating conversations with anyone other than her one friend, Emily. At home she tends to sleep a great deal, but she always seems tired. This year she stopped playing soccer after school and cries when her parents "force" her to play with other children. **(Internal Emotional States)**

4. John is a tenth grader at a regular high school. He spends most of his time in a community-based instruction program, where he is learning job skills. During this semester he is working at a movie theater in the afternoon. He stocks all of the candy machines and the popcorn concession. Then he vacuums the entire theater. John is noisy at times as he whistles and makes random vocalizations during his work. He continually engages in repetitive motions. He does not acknowledge or say hello to anyone unless he's reminded to do so. He used to sway back and forth whenever standing, but now he uses this to his advantage while vacuuming. In his classes at the school, John uses a communication board to indicate his major needs, because he seldom verbalizes to anyone and does not have the physical control to use sign language. During a basic social studies class he frequently jumps out of his seat, vocalizes, rocks for a few seconds, then returns to his seat. Although he is not able to read on a tenth grade level, he enjoys watching the videos in class and can answer some basic factual questions about countries studied. **(Developmental Disabilities, e.g., autism)**

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 1, Activity Sheet: Types of Challenging Behaviors Activity Agenda

3. Review the following activity agenda with the class, outlining the group tasks. Information on disorders can be found in the reading section of the Participant's Manual.

Activity Sheet

Types of Challenging Behaviors Activity Agenda

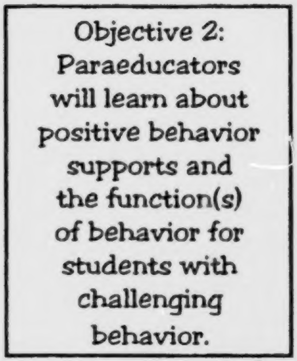
	Time
1. Within each group, members assign roles (facilitator, recorder, reporter, time keeper).	2 min.
2. Facilitator reads disorder description.	1 min.
3. Group members come to consensus about what type of behavior disorder best describes the student in the description and why. (Participants may refer to readings in the Participant's Manual)	5 min.
4. Group members describe specific behaviors that impact the student in the description, both academically and socially.	8 min.
5. Group members summarize their work, and prepare to share that summary with the whole class (one minute per group).	4 min.

Note to the Instructor

Emphasize that challenging behaviors include both externalizing behaviors and internal emotional states. Internal emotional states may sometimes be overlooked, but they can also affect learning. Students exhibit a wide range of behaviors that may be considered normal, but the intensity and degree to which those behaviors are exhibited over time help determine whether a particular behavior is a disability. Also emphasize that an evaluation process is used by teams of professionals to determine types of behavior disabilities. These are general examples of types of behaviors that may be encountered in school settings. The determination of a disability or a disorder is always done by the professionals and the team.

A2 FUNCTIONS OF BEHAVIOR (30 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B1-4)

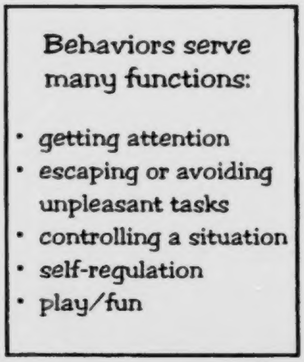

Objective 2:
Paraeducators
will learn about
positive behavior
supports and
the function(s)
of behavior for
students with
challenging
behavior.

B1-4

Read Aloud

Objective 2: Paraeducators will learn about positive behavior supports and the function(s) of behavior for students with challenging behavior.

Show Overhead (OH B1-5)


Behaviors serve
many functions:

- getting attention
- escaping or avoiding unpleasant tasks
- controlling a situation
- self-regulation
- play/fun

B1-5

Read Aloud

Behaviors can serve many functions (or purposes). They can indicate that a child wants attention, to escape something unpleasant, to control a situation, to regulate him/herself or have fun. If we want to change a behavior, we need to know which function it serves and then teach the student a more appropriate way to meet that goal.

Functions of Behavior Role-Play Activity: (24 minutes)

1. Group the participants into five small groups. Assign each group a number from one to five.

Note to the Instructor

Groups must have at least three persons to ensure that all role play parts can be performed.

Read Aloud

The purpose of this activity is to understand how a challenging behavior can serve many different functions. Each group will be taking part in a role-play for a third grade class that is learning multiplication tables. Each paraeducator will participate in the role-play as either a student or a paraeducator. One person should have the role of target student; one the role of paraeducator assisting the target student (who will engage in a disruptive behavior) and the others are student peers.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 1, Activity Sheet: Functions of Behavior Role-Play Activity

2. Tell each group to silently read the role-play that is consistent with the group number you gave them in step one.
3. Ask each group to assign parts for their role-play which will be performed for the class.
4. Ask for a group to volunteer to act out its assigned role play.
5. Ask the other participants in the class to identify the function of the behavior portrayed by the target student and to explain their reasons.
6. Ask another group to act out its role- play and repeat the class's identification of the function and the reasons. Continue until all groups have completed their role-plays.

Note to the Instructor

If you are running short on time, call on only three or four groups to complete their role plays.

Functions of Behavior Role-Play Scripts (with key)

Paraeducator's role for all role plays:
You are Ms./Mr. Jones, a paraeducator working with a small group of third graders who are working on multiplication tables. You may have the students working individually with flash cards, you may have the students working in pairs quizzing each other on times tables, or you may be reviewing strategies for how to remember multiplication facts. Your lesson should be roughly the same for all role plays. Remember, this is a role play where a student will "act out," so deal with the behavior in any way that you feel is appropriate; the focus of this activity is not on your skills as a paraeducator, rather on understanding the functions of student behavior.

Role play 1

Target student role: You are a third grader in Ms. Jones's class. It seems that no one ever talks to you on the playground at recess. Sometimes you ask other students to play tetherball with you and they run away. Today there was no room for you to sit at your favorite lunch table and so you had to sit at the end of the boys' table. But, in class, Ms. Jones is always nice. And she knows that you are smart! And she likes it when you answer her questions and talk to her about things you like. And she keeps the other kids from saying mean things to you.

Finally, the time for math class is here. You have so much to tell her and show her!
- When she begins the lesson, you decide to answer all the questions before the other students do (if you answer before they raise their hands she'll surely call on you!).
- You want to show her your new backpack and the new pens that you bought.
- And the kids and Ms. Jones might like to know that you now have your own flashcards at home.
- And maybe they should know that you learned a new song from The Wizard of Oz – it's called "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." And this would be the perfect time to sing it for everyone! (Start singing the song.)

It'll be so great that they know all these neat things about you!

What is the function of this behavior? **(Attention)**

Role play 2

Target student role: You are in Ms. Jones's third-grade class. You've just come from lunch, and you're getting hot and tired. She's up there blabbing on and on about your least favorite topic, multiplication tables. Who needs them? They are so stupid and boring! Who would ever use them? And she always gives out these stupid quizzes afterwards and you always get half of them wrong. Then your parents get angry and try to force you to study more, and they take away your computer games, TV, and time with friends. This is not a road you want to go down!

- When Ms. Jones begins to talk, you say, "Oh, NOT more times tables. How many of these stupid things are there?"
- She responds to you, and then you continue to make silly noises and funny faces and roll your eyes every time someone answers a question.
- You can't find your pencil, and so you ask her if you could go to your locker.
- When she scolds you for forgetting things, you suddenly feel that you want a drink.
- You ask to go to the bathroom.
- You yawn.
- You doodle on your math book cover.
- For awhile you put your head down and hum softly to yourself while trying to daydream (anything but those times tables!).
- You ask to go to the bathroom again.

What is the function of these behaviors? **(Escape)**

Role play 3

Target student role: You are a student in Ms. Jones's third-grade class. Math class is about to start and she thinks she's going to force you to learn some stupid multiplication tables! Well, you've got to show her and the other students what a waste of time this is! Besides, it's if she wasn't such a bad teacher and school wasn't so ridiculous you would have been in fourth grade But, oh no–like somehow hearing these things again is going to make you want to learn them!

When Ms. Jones pulls out the chalk and blackboard and starts with those numbers, you do the following:

- Pull out a piece of paper and draw a picture of a woman on it. Only she's fat and has horns!
- When Mrs. Jones is talking to a student, show the picture to other students and get them all to laugh.
- When she calls on you and asks you what you're doing, say "I'm not doing anything!"
- When she confronts you and asks you to stop, you say, "This class is stupid!"
- After her next move you should retreat and be quiet. This time put pencils in your ears to make the class laugh.
- When she asks you (or tells you) to stop, ask her why she's always picking on you and why she's never fair.
- Say, "Other kids do silly things and they don't get into trouble."
- Say, "I'm only trying to make kids laugh. I'm not doing anything *wrong*!"

What is the function of this behavior? **(Control)**

Role play 4

Target student role: You are a third grader in Ms. Jones's class. It's late morning, and you had to get up at 6:00 to leave by 6:30 to catch the bus. There was no time for breakfast, and you feel tired and shaky and your stomach is grumbling. Besides, the chair you sit in is way too small, it's hot in this classroom, and you have been sitting for over five hours (one hour on the bus, and in school since then). The fluorescent lights give you a headache, and you just want to get up and move around and get some air.

You find that when you feel like this, if you just hum to yourself and rock a little in your chair, it takes your mind off the hunger and headache. If you put your head down on the table and tune out the noise, it makes you feel better. You don't know these times tables and you are getting very anxious. You start to rock faster and begin shuffling your feet and leaning way back in your chair. When the teacher moves you away from the group (because of all your commotion) you get even more worked up. When it comes time to write, you can't sit still.
- You hum quietly to yourself.
- You rock back and forth in your chair, then lean your chair back
- You tap your pencil on the desk.
- You put your head down on the table.

What is the function of the behavior? **(Self-regulation)**

Role play 5

Target student role: You are a third grader in Ms. Jones's class. It's time for math and you already know your multiplication tables. This can get kind of boring. But you're really good at keeping yourself occupied.
- You take out a piece of paper and begin drawing lots of hearts, flowers and stars in a pretty design. You really get into it, drawing your intricate designs quickly!
- When you're done with drawing (or when Ms. Jones asks you to stop), you begin making a paper airplane. When Ms. Jones turns her back you sail it over to your friend Tommy on the other side of the classroom. Wow! It actually flies!
- Ms. Jones then takes the plane away. With nothing left to play with you begin to daydream. You line up little pencils and pieces of jewelry and stuff on your desk and then pretend they are golf balls and your pencil is the golf club. You try to spin the pencil or pens, or hit the smaller items across the room to see how many points you could get.
- You try to get your friends to compete with you in who could hit items the farthest!

What is the function of the behavior? **(Play)**

Discussion Questions

1. What behaviors were easy to identify the functions of? Why?
2. What behaviors were difficult to identify the functions of? Why?
3. What does this activity tell you about making assumptions about student behaviors?
4. How does knowing the functions of a behavior affect how you respond to it?

A4 POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS (30 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B1-6)

> **Paraeducators will understand their role(s) when working with children with challenging behaviors.**

B1-6

Read Aloud

Paraeducators will learn understand their role when working with children with challenging behaviors.

Show Overhead (OH B1-7)

> **Prevention strategies:**
>
> **Things that are done before a challenging behavior occurs to reduce the chance of that behavior occurring in the future.**

B1-7

Read Aloud

Prevention strategies are things that are done before a challenging behavior occurs to reduce the chance of that behavior occurring in the future. For example, a challenging behavior may be prevented by minimizing the student's exposure to provocative or stressful events. When you work with students with challenging behaviors, you may be asked to use prevention strategies.

Q&A Discussion Questions

1. What is a challenging behavior that you have used to cope with anger or stress (e.g., swearing, having a tantrum, smoking, others)?
2. What are some strategies that you could employ to prevent that behavior from occurring in the future?

Show Overhead (OH B1-8)

Replacement behaviors:

Teaching a new, more desirable behavior to replace an existing behavior.

B1-8

Read Aloud

Replacement behaviors are new, more desirable behaviors that are taught to a student to replace an existing behavior (e.g counting to ten instead of punching when angry). You may be asked to model replacement behaviors when working with students with challenging behaviors.

Q&A Discussion Questions

1. What are some behaviors that you could use to replace your own challenging behavior(s)?

Show Overhead (OH B1-9)

Effective responses:

Positive, safe,
humane, and
educational ways
to respond
to a student's
challenging
behaviors.

B1-9

Read Aloud

Effective responses are positive, safe, humane, and educational ways of responding to a student's challenging behaviors. An example is speaking to a student in private about a misbehavior rather than reprimanding him in front of the class. Positive behavior support plans are based on understanding the function of certain behaviors while maximizing student strengths. The goal is to try to teach another behavior to replace the challenging one. A positive behavior support plan also addresses how people should respond to misbehaviors in positive ways. The story of Samantha from your readings is an example of one of these plans.

A5 BREAK (5 min.)

A6 IDENTIFYING POSITIVE SUPPORTS ACTIVITY (30 min.)

1. Group the participants into pairs.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 1, Identifying Positive Supports Activity Worksheet

2. Tell the class that the purpose of this activity is to help paraeducators identify positive behavior supports.

3. Tell paraeducators, working in pairs, to review "The Story of Samantha" from their readings.
4. Tell participants to fill out the Behavior Strategies Activity Worksheet identifying Samantha's strengths in addition to her challenging behaviors, what happens before and after those behaviors, and the strategies used to prevent and replace and respond to the behavior.
5. Give the participants 20 minutes to complete this in pairs.
6. Ask participants to share their work with the entire group by asking for volunteers to read aloud their answers for each section. You may write these on an easel pad.
7. Explain that this is the process used for positive behavior supports. In subsequent units they will learn more details about how professionals assess behavior, teach replacement behaviors and respond to challenging behavior.
8. Tell participants that Samantha was very successful at developing friends and succeeding in school after the functional assessment had been completed and her positive behavior supports were implemented.

Activity Worksheet

Identifying Positive Supports Activity Worksheet

Directions: In your group, identify the following based on the Samantha Story in the Participant's Manual. (20 min.)

Name: Samantha

① What are her strengths and interests?	② What are her challenging behaviors?
③ What happens before the behaviors (antecedents)?	④ What happens after the behaviors (consequences)?
⑤ What do the behaviors communicate?	⑥ What prevention strategies could be used?
⑦ What replacement behavior skills could be taught?	⑧ Responses?

Behavior Strategies Activity: The Story of Samantha (key)

Strengths & interests:
- poetry
- computers
- music
- being with friends

Challenging behaviors:
- scratching others
- biting others
- hitting others
- throwing things
- leaving the room

What happens before a behavior occurs:
- lack of sleep
- changes in routine and unpredictability
- encountering tasks that are too difficult
- not having any choices

What happens after a behavior occurs:
- lots of (negative) attention
- excitement
- Samantha is in control
- children avoid her

Communication/functions of behavior(s)
- to get attention
- to escape uncomfortable or frustrating demands

Prevention strategies:
- increased opportunities for attention
- increased opportunities to make more friends (Girl Scouts, church group)
- increased opportunities for control
- helped her to anticipate upcoming events
- change in medication

Replacement Behaviors:
- taught Samantha how to recognize her anger using cards
- taught her how to find a quiet place and relax when frustrated
- taught her to practice social skills (friendship skills) in natural settings

Responses:
- used reinforcers identified by Samantha, such as ice cream, to reward appropriate behaviors
- used a quiet space for her to de-stress in when she got angry (also a prevention strategy)

Note to the Instructor

Only nine minutes remain on the agenda for the discussion questions. Therefore, pairs should be randomly called on for answers to the questions. You may wish to refer to your key for the Behavior Strategies Activity (Story of Samantha) when discussing the following questions.

Discussion Questions (9 min.)

1. What did you identify as the initial and long-term consequences of Samantha's behaviors?
2. What did you identify as prevention strategies?
3. What did you identify as replacement behaviors?
4. What did you identify as the team's responses?

A7 KNOWLEDGE REVIEW (20 min.)

Knowledge Review Procedures

1. Provide accommodations that may affect participation in the *Knowledge Review* as needed.
2. Distribute the *Knowledge Reviews*.
3. Review the instructions for completion (which are found at the top of the *Knowledge Review*) including asking participants to put their names on their reviews.
4. Give participants 10 minutes to complete the *Knowledge Review* (plus additional time as needed to ensure that all participants have ample time to complete the review).
5. After all participants have completed the *Knowledge Review*, guide them (as a group) through correction of their own reviews using the following procedures:
   a) Ask for a volunteer to read the first question on the *Knowledge Review*.
   b) Next, ask for volunteers to answer that question (if no participant volunteers, provide the answer).
   c) Scoring:
   - If the participant's circled response is correct, nothing further is required.
   - If the participant's circled response is incorrect, the participant should mark a check to the left of the item number and underline the correct response.

EXAMPLE:

✓ 1. Paraeducators are:
a) highly overpaid
[✓ b)] babysitters
c) important team members
d) spies for the administration

   d) Explain why the answer is correct and ask the class if they have any further questions. All of the *Knowledge Review* items are found in the unit's required readings; therefore, you should be familiar with the required readings to answer participant questions.
   e) Repeat steps a-d for the remaining *Knowledge Review* items.
   f) Collect all the *Knowledge Reviews*.
   g) Follow the procedures for summarizing the *Knowledge Review* data.

A8 EVALUATION, PRACTICUM, AND PREPARATION FOR NEXT CLASS (10 min.)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Practicum requirements section

1. Instruct participants to turn briefly to the practicum requirement section of the Participant's Manual and ask if they have any questions about their practicum activities.
2. Assign the reading for the next class.
3. Ask the participants to complete the unit evaluation form and collect it along with the *Knowledge Reviews*.

Knowledge Review

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Site: ______________________________

Instructor: ______________________________

Directions: Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.

1. Why do behaviors of students become a significant concern in school?
   a) they can interfere with learning
   b) they can interfere with social relationships
   c) they can interfere with safety of the schools
   d) all of the above

2. Which of the following would most likely be considered a characteristic of a student with an attention problem?
   a) being tired and lethargic
   b) having problems organizing work
   c) frequently fidgeting and squirming
   d) demonstrating a hostile attitude
   e) b & c only

3. Externalizing behaviors most likely would include:
   a) unusual thoughts
   b) frequent physical or acting out behavior
   c) passivity
   d) anxiousness and fearfulness
   e) all of the above

4. Students who fear school, who might be withdrawn or who are anxious, may most likely be considered to have which type of disorder?
   a) internalizing
   b) passive aggressive behavior
   c) fear of failure
   d) neurological disorder

5. Which of the following is **not** true about autism?
   a) it is always associated with aggression
   b) it represents a range of behaviors across a scale of different intensities
   c) it is associated with communication difficulties
   d) it often interferes with social interaction

6. A functional assessment of behavior provides information about
   a) what factors may contribute to a particular behavior
   b) the causes of a behavior problem
   c) whether a behavioral disorder exists
   d) the extent to which the behavior can be changed

7. Which of the following is generally **not** part of a positive behavior support plan?
   a) prevention strategies
   b) teaching alternative behaviors
   c) punishment strategies
   d) response strategies
   e) a functional assessment

8. Behavior communicates many things and always serves a purpose or function. Which of the following are common "functions" of behavior?
   a) to escape something unpleasant
   b) to annoy teachers
   c) to get attention
   d) a and b
   e) a and c only

9. Which of the following is **not** the role of a paraeducator when addressing behavioral needs of students?
   a) modeling appropriate social skills
   b) deciding on appropriate punishments for students who misbehave
   c) observing and collecting information about behavior
   d) providing instructional support to students
   e) promoting social relationships of students

10. Which of the following is an example of teaching a replacement behavior?
   a) teaching a student to get attention by tapping instead of pulling hair
   b) always responding to a misbehavior in a consistent way
   c) moving a student away from an object that distracts him
   d) redirecting a student who has become frustrated and angry

Knowledge Review Key

Unit I: Understanding Student Behavior

1) d

2) e

3) b

4) a

5) a

6) a

7) c

8) e

9) b

10) a

Overhead Masters

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

What school district are you from?

What grade(s) do you work in?

What is your favorite hobby?

What is one skill you hope to learn in the course?

B1-1

Ground Rules for Confidentiality and Trust

1. Refrain from using the names of school colleagues.
2. Refrain from using the names of students or family members.
3. When describing a situation, avoid using identifying information (e.g., my current supervisor; the one I worked with last year).
4. If something slips, commit to keeping information within the group.

B1-2

Objective 1:

Paraeducators will understand types of challenging behaviors and how behavior affects a student's education.

B1-3

Objective 2:

Paraeducators will learn about positive behavior supports and the function(s) of behavior for students with challenging behavior.

B1-4

Behaviors serve many functions:

- getting attention
- escaping or avoiding unpleasant tasks
- controlling a situation
- self-regulation
- play/fun

B1-5

Paraeducators will understand their role(s) when working with children with challenging behaviors.

B1-6

Prevention strategies:

Things that are done before a challenging behavior occurs to reduce the chance of that behavior occurring in the future.

B1-7

Replacement behaviors:

Teaching a new, more desirable behavior to replace an existing behavior.

B1-8

Effective responses:

Positive, safe,
humane, and
educational ways
to respond
to a student's
challenging
behaviors.

B1-9

Unit 2

Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Instructor's Overview

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Brief Description of Unit

This unit addresses the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior. Paraeducators will be able to describe behaviors in observable terms and will learn a variety of ways to record useful information about behavior. This information helps educators determine the factors that contribute to challenging behaviors.

Hours of instruction (in class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.)

1. Paraeducators will understand the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior and describing it in observable terms. (K)
2. Paraeducators will recognize various factors that occur prior to, during, or following challenging behaviors. (K)
3. Paraeducators will learn various ways to gather and record information about challenging behavior. (K)
4. Paraeducators will demonstrate observing challenging behavior, describing it in observable terms, and gathering useful information to share with the team. (S)

Preparing For and Implementing the Unit

Required Readings (located only in the Participant's Manual):

Beach Center on Families and Disability. (1998). *Functional assessment of behavior.* University of Kansas, Lawrence: Author.

Foster-Johnson, L., & Dunlap, G. (1993). Using functional assessment to develop effective, individualized interventions for challenging behaviors. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 25* (3), 44-48.

Janney, R., & Snell, M.E. (2000). Individualized behavioral support plans: Problem identification and functional assessment. In R. Janney, & M.E. Snell, *Teachers' guides to inclusive practices: Behavioral support* (pp. 13-36). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Instructor Materials:
- overhead projector & screen
- Unit 2 overhead masters (must be copied onto transparencies)
- Flip charts & markers

Instructor Preparation for Unit 2:
- Read the required readings prior to the class (located only in the Participant's Manual).
- Gather all instructor materials.
- Consider the physical arrangement of the classroom to facilitate class activities.
- Review Practicum Requirements for Unit 2.

Participant Preparation for Unit 2:
- Read the required readings **prior to class.**
- Based on the required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class
- Bring writing materials for note-taking and activities to class.
- Review practicum requirements for Unit 2.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Instructor Implementation of Unit 2:
The unit includes an agenda with suggested timelines, lesson plan, required readings, a *Knowledge Review,* and practicum requirements to be completed in the educational setting. The agenda is located at the beginning of each unit. The activities are interspersed within the lesson plan. The *Knowledge Review* is located at the end of each unit.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed is found at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher. The negotiated requirement must be approved by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities; (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Alberto, P.A., & Troutman, A. (1999). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers*. Columbus: Prentice-Hall.

Demchak, M.A., & Bossert, K.W. (1996). Assessing problem behaviors. *Innovations: Research to Practice Series.* Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

Hamilton, R., Welkowitz, J., DeOliva, S., Prue, J., & Fox, T. (1994). *Prevention, teaching, and responding: A planning team process for supporting students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education.* Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Horner, R., & Carr, E.G. (1997). Behavioral support for students with severe disabilities: Functional assessment and comprehensive intervention. *Journal of Special Education, 31*, 84-104.

O'Neill, R., Horner, R., Albin, R., Storey, K., & Sprague, J. (1990). *Functional analysis of problem behavior: A practical assessment guide*. Sycamore, IL: Sycamore.

Web Sites

Council on Exceptional Children:
http://www.cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs,
factsheet on Functional Behavioral Assessment:
http://www. ideapractices.org/docs/OSEPdocs/fba.htm

Agenda

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior (3 hours)

	Agenda item	Time
A1.	Observing, Recording and Reporting Data	17 min.
	Introduce Objective & Data Collection (2 min.) Observing Behavior Activity (15 min.)	
A2.	Components of a Functional Assessment	46 min.
	Introduce Objective (4 min.) The Behavior Game (30 min.) Behavior Game Discussion (12 min.)	
A3.	BREAK	15 min.
A4.	Observing Behavior Activity: (Cont.)	40 min.
	Observing Behavior Group Work (20 min.) Observing Behavior Report & Discussion (20 min.)	
A5.	Gathering Information about Factors that Affect Behavior	32 min.
	Introduce Objective (1 min.) ABC Activity (21 min.) ABC Discussion (10 min.)	
A6.	Knowledge Review	20 min.
A7.	Evaluation, Practicum, and Preparation for the Next Class	10 min.

A1 OBSERVING, RECORDING AND REPORTING DATA (17 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B2-1)

Objective 1:

Paraeducators will understand the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior and describing it in observable terms.

B2-1

Read Aloud

Objective 1: Paraeducators will understand the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior and describing it in observable terms.

Show Overhead (OH B2-2)

Reasons for gathering information:

- to determine factors associated with the behavior
- to determine if intervention is working
- to provide insight as to "why" behavior occurs so it can be changed

B2-2

Read Aloud

The reasons for gathering information include: to determine factors associated with the behavior; to determine if interventions are working, and to provide insight as to why behavior occurs so that it can be changed.

Show Overhead (OH B2-3)

When gathering
information,
behaviors
should be
observable and
described in
measurable
terms.

B 2-3

Read Aloud

When gathering information, behaviors should be observable and described in measurable terms.

Observing Behavior Activity (15 minutes)

Note to the Instructor

The purpose of this activity is for participants to practice recording frequencies of specific behaviors while also participating in a class. Participants will be comparing collecting data on observable/discrete behaviors and subjective behaviors for the next hour. The actual activity (summarizing the data) will take place after the break.

1. Divide participants into three groups. Each group will use a different behavior scenario for this activity.

Refer to the Participant Manual

Unit 2 Activity Sheet: Behavior Observation Scenarios

2. Assign each group a scenario (1, 2, or 3) from the behavior observation scenarios. These scenarios give more information about what kinds of behavior(s) each group should chart.
3. Ask each group to record your or another participant's behaviors during the next hour of class (and during the break) on the behavior observation chart.
4. Refer each group to the blank chart which lists behaviors across the top. Along the side are blocks of time (also called time intervals). Group members are to count (tally

or write hash marks) in each time interval every time the person being observed exhibits the behavior specified at the top of the chart.

5. After an hour the participants will be asked to summarize their tallies (called a frequency count) to report on the behaviors observed.
6. Tell participants not to discuss their task with other group members before they conduct their observations; they will have group discussion time after the break.
7. Ask participants to individually read their behavior scenarios.
8. Give participants 5 minutes to become familiar with the observation chart and the recording procedures. The group that is assigned scenario number two will need a few minutes to randomly choose the two participants that they will be observing (this is explained in the scenario). There should be no discussion of the behavior to be observed.
9. Tell participants that they should start observing and recording data "now" and should continue observing throughout the next activity.

Behavior Observation Scenarios

1. You will be observing the instructor for the next hour and during your break. You are responsible for recording a tally on your behavior chart under the heading "gives emphasis" for each time you observe the instructor emphasizing a point. You are also responsible for noting the length of time the emphasis takes place. You should record the length of time in seconds, including the time that the emphasizing behavior begins and ends. Note that you will be recording these data in five-minute intervals on the observation chart. Ignore all other behavior boxes on your observation chart.

2. Choose a volunteer from your group who is willing to be observed. You will be observing this student for the next hour and during your break. After you choose the student, you should have no further conversation about the behaviors that you will be observing. You will be observing two behaviors: talking and leaving the room. Each time the student performs either behavior you should mark a tally on your observation chart (use a different symbol for each behavior so that you will be able to distinguish talking from leaving the room). Note the length of time the student is gone when he/she leaves the room. You should record the length of time in seconds, including the time that the leaving the room behavior begins and ends. Record these data in five-minute intervals on the observation chart. Ignore all other behavior boxes on your observation chart.

3. You will be observing the instructor for the next hour and during your break. You are responsible for observing three behaviors: saying "uh," pointing to a student, and giving a direction. Each time the instructor performs any of these behaviors you should mark a tally on your observation chart (use a different symbol for each behavior so that you will be able to distinguish them). Note the length of time it takes for the instructor to give a direction, in seconds, including the time that the direction behavior begins and ends. Note that you will be recording these data in five-minute intervals on the observation chart. Ignore all other behavior boxes on your observation chart.

Behavior Observation Chart

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2		Scenario 3		
Time in minutes	Gives Emphasis	Talks	Leaves Room	Says "uh'	Points to Students	Gives Directions
0-5						
6-10						
11-15						
16-20						
21-25						
26-30						
31-35						
36-40						
41-45						
46-50						
51-55						
56-60						
Break						

Tally and/or duration of behavior

A2 COMPONENTS OF FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT (46 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B2-4)

Objective 2:

Paraeducators will recognize various factors that occur prior to, during, and following challenging behaviors.

B2-4

Read Aloud

Objective 2: Paraeducators will recognize various factors that occur prior to, during, and following challenging behaviors.

Show Overhead (OH B2-5)

A functional assessment of behavior provides information about the behavioral support needs of individuals with challenging behavior.

B2-5

Read Aloud

A functional assessment of behavior provides information about the behavioral support needs of individuals with challenging behavior.

Show Overhead (OH B2-6)

> Types of information
> to be gathered:
>
> What happens before,
> during, and after
> behavior(s) (types,
> frequency, duration,
> intensity), setting
> events, other factors
> (physical, medical).

B2-6

Read Aloud

Types of information to be gathered for a functional assessment include what happens before, during, and after behaviors. This includes the types, frequency, duration, and intensity of a behavior as well as setting events and other information such as physical and medical factors.

The Behavior Game (30 minutes)

Note to the Instructor

The purpose of the activity is to allow participants an opportunity to identify key concepts related to gathering information about behavior(s) that will subsequently be used by the team for functional assessment and for planning a positive behavior (or individual student behavior) support plan.

1. Divide the participants into groups of four. These groups will be teams for the game.
2. Give participants the instructions for the game:

Instructions for the Game

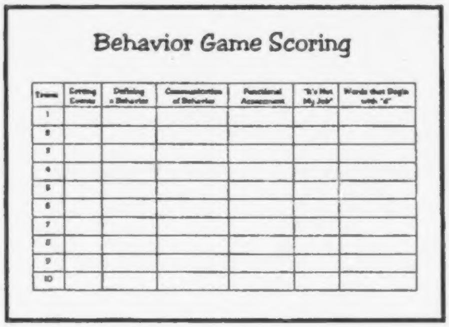
- Any member of the team can raise his/her hand to signal knowing the answer to the question.
- Call on the first team in which a hand has been raised.
- Each group will have 30 seconds to confer before answering the question.
- The team must answer the question if a member raises a hand.
- If a team answers a question incorrectly, the instructor should say, "That is not the correct answer" at which point members of other teams may raise their hands to signal that they wish to answer the question.

Note to the Instructor

If participants are unable to answer a question, give the correct answer. Participants will have an opportunity to ask further questions during the discussion following the game.

- Give one point for each correct answer and subtract one point for each incorrect answer on the Behavior Game Scoring overhead.
- If a team answers a question correctly, that team may choose the category for the next question.

Show Overhead (OH B2-7)



Behavior Game Scoring

Teams	Setting Events	Defining a Behavior	Communication of Behavior	Functional Assessment	"It's Not My Job"	Words that Begin with "d"
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

OH B2-7

Read Aloud

The categories for the questions are: Setting events, defining a behavior, communication of behavior, functional assessment, "It's not my job," and words that begin with "d."

3. Ask questions (listed below) until all have been answered or until 28 minutes have passed.

Note to the Instructor

You can end the game with a bonus round. Choose a bonus question from the questions provided (or create your own bonus question), and ask all teams the same question. Give teams two minutes to write their answers. Tell each team that they can wager as many points as they have earned, but if they do not answer the question correctly, they will lose the amount wagered. Read the answer to the bonus question out loud while each team scores their answers. Teams report the number of points they earned or lost. After the game is over, total the points for each team and announce the winning team!

Behavior Game Questions

Setting events

1. What is the term used to describe environmental factors that precede a behavior? (antecedents)
2. What is the term used to describe what happens after a behavior has occurred? (consequences)
3. Name the observation method that is used to identify connections that can be made before, during, and after a behavior. (ABC observation method)
4. Give one example of a physiological factor that may influence challenging behaviors. (sickness, fatigue, hunger, arousal, etc.)
5. Name a classroom environment factor that may also have an effect on behavior. (crowding, high noise level, temperature, disruptions, etc.)
6. Setting events may include instructional factors. Name two that are commonly associated with behavior challenges. (lack of clarity in instruction, activities that are too difficult, activities that are perceived to be of low interest)
7. True or false: Physical illness, hunger, and reactions to medications are physical factors that can contribute to challenging behavior. (True)
8. Analyzing who, what, where, and when a behavior happens will help us figure out the ______________. (why or cause)

Defining and describing behavior

1. What is the term used to describe behaviors that can be seen or counted? (observable)
2. What is the term used to describe behaviors that can NOT be directly observed? (private events or covert)
3. Give an example of aggressive behavior that is clearly defined (any definition that is measurable, observable and indicates aggression towards people or property e.g., June hit Bob with her bookbag twice today)
4. What are the two main words that describe the best way to define behavior? (observable, and measurable)
5. If antecedents, behaviors, and consequences are directly linked to each other, this is called what? (ABC analysis)
6. There are many ways to gather information about a student and his/her behavior. One way is to directly observe the student. The others are to review existing records or give tests or interviews. These others are called what type of measurement? (indirect)
7. Determining how many times a behavior happens in a given time period is called what kind of count? (frequency count)
8. How long a behavior happens is called its ___________? (duration)

Behavior Game Questions (continued)

Communication of behavior

1. Fill in the blank: Challenging behaviors all serve a ______ (purpose or function) that, from the student's perspective, makes them reasonable.
2. Name a function that challenging behaviors may serve (attention, avoidance, control, play, self-regulation)
3. Students who engage in challenging behaviors when things are unpleasant or frightening for them may be said to be engaging in what function of behavior? (escape)
4. Students who engage in many power struggles or arguments may be exhibiting behaviors that serve to give them what? (power/control)
5. If a student is angry after being bullied and later in the day vandalizes the locker of the bully, this might be an example of what type of behavior? (revenge, displacement or transference)
6. Acting up because class is boring might be an example of what type of function? (play, escape, attention)
7. A behavior that relaxes a person or helps them cope with stress serves which function? (self-regulation)
8. When students engage in behavior that results in many power struggles they are most likely doing this to gain what? (control/power)
9. When a student hits another student in response to a previous painful experience, the purpose may be to get what? (revenge)
10. If a student engages in a behavior that continually puts him/her in the limelight, he may be trying to seek what? (attention).

Functional assessment and intervention

1. What is a strategy used to help identify factors that influence challenging behaviors? (functional assessment)
2. What is the first step of the functional assessment process? (information gathering).
3. What is the term used to describe a withdrawal of a treatment effect? (reversal)
4. Strategies that are used to minimize challenging behaviors or to stop them before they occur are called what kind of strategies? (prevention)
5. Another term for replacement behaviors might be what? (social skills)
6. An educated guess or hunch about why a behavior is occurring is called what? (hypothesis)
7. What is the term used to describe the things one does after a challenging behavior occurs? (response strategies)

Behavior Game Questions (continued)

It's not my job!

1. What happens with the information collected during the information gathering stage of a functional assessment? (An informed guess or hypothesis is formed to explain the reasons for the challenging behaviors.)
2. What is the term for the group of people who are responsible for developing an intervention for challenging behaviors? (student planning or support team)
3. Who should be informed of the results of a functional assessment? (all members of the school community who interact with the student and who have a need to know; the student's team)
4. Who should inform the team of the findings of the functional assessment? (the teacher or case manager)
5. Who administers standardized tests or normed behavioral measures? (psychologist or special educator)
6. Who decides which social skills or replacement behaviors a particular student should learn? (the team, special educator, related service professionals, etc.).
7. Who needs to give consent for the behavioral plan that is in the student's Individualized Education Plan? (the student's parents/guardians)

Words that begin with "d"

1. What is the term used to describe behaviors that are a second priority to address and that could become destructive if ignored? (disruptive)
2. What is the term used to describe behaviors that may not require a formal plan unless they are important to a student's team members? (distracting)
3. Which behaviors are health or life threatening to the student or others? (destructive or dangerous)
4. A student who has had emotional or behavioral problems that interfere with learning, over a long period of time, and is in need of special education, is considered to have an emotional _____________? (disability)
5. What is the term for the system that helps students be in control of their own behavior? (discipline)
6. What is the term for the bits of information gathered to use in a functional analysis? (data)
7. What methods of measuring behavior include permanent products and live observation? (direct methods)

Q&A Discussion Questions (12 min.)

1. Review the functional assessment overhead and clarify questions from the participants based on the Behavior Game.
2. What questions did your team answer incorrectly?
3. What other questions do you have about functional assessment?

A3 BREAK (15 min)

A4 OBSERVING BEHAVIOR ACTIVITY (cont.) (40 min)

Note to the Instructor

This activity is based on the observations that were introduced in the beginning of the class.

1. Tell participants that they can now stop the observations they have been conducting.
2 Ask participants to get into their Behavior Observation Scenario groups.
3. Introduce the activity by stating that this activity is designed to address the first two objectives for this class. The participants have been given practice and the opportunity to discuss gathering information and describing it in observable terms. They have also looked at and will discuss what happened before, during, and after a behavior occurred.
4. Tell participants that their task will be to look at their observation data individually and as a group. They will be responsible for reporting their group data to the class.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 2 Activity Sheet: Observing Behavior Activity Agenda

5. Give participants 20 minutes to work in groups following the Observing Behavior Activity agenda below.
6. Ask participants to report their group data summary.

Observing Behavior Activity Agenda (20 min)

Activity	Time
1. Individually compute totals for your observations. Be sure to note the periods when each behavior occurred most and least frequently. Note any other patterns that you think are important.	4 min.
2. As a group summarize your individual observations. Did you get the same totals for the behaviors? Did you notice the same patterns for most and least frequent behaviors? Discuss any differences that you may have. Why do you think they occurred?	5 min.
3. As a group, form a report to the teacher based on the summary of your group's data. This should include similarities as well as differences in the data. This should also include any additional information you think would be important to share with a team who will be using your data to make decisions about a student's program.	10 min.
4. Elect or appoint a person to read the summary report to the class.	1 min.

Discussion Questions (20 min)

1. Which behaviors were the easiest to observe? Why?
2. Did your group notice any patterns for what occurred before, during, and after a behavior?
3. Did any participants experience frustration with their observations? Why?
4. Would it have been helpful not to have to watch constantly for behaviors, but only to watch at specific times?
5. Did any participants have difficulty with observations while the class was in progress? What does this tell you about the challenges of doing observations while working with students?
6. What did this activity teach you about having measurable and agreed upon behaviors before doing observations?

A5 GATHERING INFORMATION ABOUT FACTORS THAT AFFECT BEHAVIOR (32 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B2-8)

> **Objective 3:**
> **Paraeducators will learn various ways to gather and record information about challenging behavior.**

Read Aloud

Objective 3: Paraeducators will learn various ways to gather and record information about challenging behaviors.

ABC Activity (21 min)

Arrange the participants into groups of four.

Note to the Instructor

If numbers are uneven for groups, the group size can be made larger or smaller as needed.

Read Aloud

As you read your materials, systematically collecting information about specific behaviors helps the team decide what is causing the behavior and how to prevent it or change it.

Show Overhead (OH B2-9)

ABC:

(A) Antecedents
(B) Behavior
(C) Consequences

B2-9

Read Aloud

Observations are often taken in a form called ABC recordings. The "A" stands for antecedents, or what happens before the behavior occurs; "B" stands for describing the challenging behavior itself; and "C" stands for consequences, or what happens after the behavior has occurred. We will be using this form of recording behaviors for the next activity.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 2 Required Reading: Janney and Snell (2000) and Activity Sheet: ABC Observation.

2. Tell the participants to read the description of Jenni's behavior found in the reading.
3. Tell the participants to identify each behavior that Jenni exhibits and to list it in the "B" column of the ABC Observation Sheet.
4. Tell the participants to identify the antecedents and to write them in the "A" column of the ABC Observation Sheet.
5. Give groups 10 minutes to record behaviors and antecedents.

Note to the Instructor

If participants need help, refer them to the examples in the reading Individualized Behavioral Support Plans (Janney & Snell, 2000).

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 2 Activity Sheet: ABC Analysis for Jenni

ABC Observation Data Sheet

Student ______________________

Exact time	A Antecedent	B Behavior	C Consequence

6. Tell the participants to read the paragraph about Jenni in their activity sheets:

   Whenever Jenni cried and hit herself, many of the students would come over to her and speak nicely to her. The other students who may have wanted the toy she had always relinquished their request. They would find something else to play with. Often children would ask her what other types of things she might like and she would have more interesting toys to examine. But, when Jenni was quiet and not fussing, children would generally ignore her.

7. Tell the participants to identify the consequences of Jenni's behavior and to write them in the "C" column of the ABC Observation Sheet.
8. Give groups 10 minutes to record behaviors and consequences.
9. Ask the participants to read their ABC's to the class.

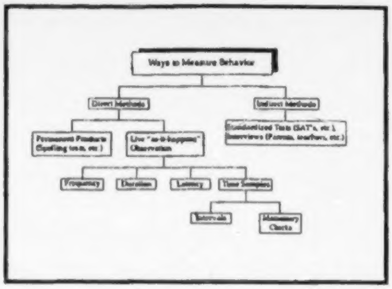
Note to the Instructor

Listen to the student responses and provide suggestions if they missed or misinterpreted behaviors.

Discussion Questions

1. Is it difficult to identify what happens before and after a behavior occurs? Why or why not?
2. What other factors that affect behavior do you think might come into play?
3. Do you think that this information helps a team develop hunches regarding why a behavior is happening? And what might be done to prevent or change it?
4. Your reading included examples of scatter plots, which document behavior over periods of time in different settings. How might these help pinpoint factors associated with Jenni's behaviors?

Show Overhead (OH B2-10)


Ways to Measure Behavior
Direct Methods
Indirect Methods
Permanent Products (Spelling tests, etc.)
Live "as-it-happens" Observation
Standardized Tests (SAT's, etc.), Interviews (Parents, teachers, etc.)
Frequency
Duration
Latency
Time Samples
Intervals
Momentary Checks

B2-10

Read Aloud

This chart explains some of the many other ways the team can gather information about students behavior. Notice that paraeducators generally are asked to gather direct (observational) information (or data). You have already had practice at collecting frequency, duration, and interval data along with antecedents and consequences.

5. Look at the overhead, what other types of measures or information might the team use to develop a plan for a student? Who else might be collecting this information?

(Answer: standardized tests, analyses of history, permanent products, file reviews, interviews collected by educators, psychologists, parents, etc.)

A6 KNOWLEDGE REVIEW (20 min.)

Knowledge Review Procedures

1. Provide accommodations that may affect participation in the *Knowledge Review* as needed.
2. Distribute the *Knowledge Reviews*.
3. Review the instructions for completion (which are found at the top of the *Knowledge Review*) including asking participants to put their names on their reviews.
4. Give participants 10 minutes to complete the *Knowledge Review* (plus additional time as needed to ensure that all participants have ample time to complete the review).
5. After all participants have completed the *Knowledge Review*, guide them (as a group) through correction of their own reviews using the following procedures:
   - a) Ask for a volunteer to read the first question on the *Knowledge Review*.
   - b) Next, ask for volunteers to answer that question (if no participant volunteers, provide the answer).
   - c) Scoring:
   - If the participant's circled response is correct, nothing further is required.
   - If the participant's circled response is incorrect, the participant should mark a check to the left of the item number and underline the correct response.

EXAMPLE:

✓ 1. Paraeducators are:
a) highly overpaid
[✓ b) babysitters]
c) important team members
d) spies for the administration

   - d) Explain why the answer is correct and ask the class if they have any further questions. All of the *Knowledge Review* items are found in the unit's required readings; therefore, you should be familiar with the required readings to answer participant questions.
   - e) Repeat steps a-d for the remaining *Knowledge Review* items.
   - f) Collect all the *Knowledge Reviews*.
   - g) Follow the procedures for summarizing the *Knowledge Review* data.

A7 EVALUATION, PRACTICUM, AND PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT CLASS (10 min)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Practicum requirements section

1. Instruct participants to turn briefly to the practicum requirements section of the Participant's Manual and ask if they have any questions about their practicum activities.
2. Assign the reading for the next class.
3. Ask the participants to complete the unit evaluation form and collect it along with the *Knowledge Reviews*.

Knowledge Review

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Site: ____________________

Instructor: ____________________

Directions: Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.

11. Descriptions of behavior are most useful when they:
    a) are observable
    b) indicate a cause for the behavior
    c) can be measured
    d) are subjective
    e) a and c only

12. Which of the following is an example of an "observable" behavior?
    a) Sally is upset that she received a "C" on her report card.
    b) Jake slams his books down on his desk whenever he arrives in math class.
    c) Henry's attitude about school gets him into trouble.
    d) Both Sam and Joshua are aggressive boys.

13. A telephone rings and you pick it up and say, "hello." If saying hello is a Behavior, then what would the Antecedent and Consequence be in an ABC Analysis?
    a) **A** would be the ring and **C** the voice on the other end.
    b) **A** would be the voice on the other end and **C** would be the phone ringing
    c) **A** is saying "hello" and **C** is the replacing of the receiver
    d) there is not enough information to tell.

14. Events that are not part of the ABC observation, that may not be readily apparent, but that contribute to the occurrence of a challenging behavior are termed:
    a) antecedents
    b) setting events
    c) consequences
    d) variables

15. Why do we gather information about what happens before and after a behavior?
    a) to develop a hunch about why the behavior occurs
    b) to document whether our interventions work
    c) to help us identify possible factors that contribute to or maintain the behavior
    d) a and c
    e) all of the above

16. A tally of the number of times a particular behavior happens is called a:
    a) scatter plot
    b) frequency count
    c) functional assessment
    d) sample

17. Which of the following explains the relationship between a student's environment and his or her behavior?
    a) The type of behavior always explain its function.
    b) Behavior is random and unpredictable.
    c) Behavior is related to the context in which it occurs and serves a function for the student.
    b) Challenging behavior is intentional and caused by factors outside of the school's control.

18. Functional assessment does which of the following?
    a) identifies what is wrong with a person
    b) compares a person's behaviors to a standardized norm
    c) examines relationships between behavior and the environment
    d) predicts which behaviors will eventually improve and which won't

19. Which of the following is considered to be a "disruptive behavior"? One that:
    a) is life threatening
    b) interferes with learning
    c) is of limited social acceptance
    d) is odd

20. A primary advantage of a scatter plot over a simple tally of behavior is that it:
    a) is easier to complete and score
    b) provides information about the frequency and the context of a behavior
    c) is more accurate
    d) is more reliable and valid

Knowledge Review Key

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

11) e

12) b

13) a

14) b

15) e

16) b

17) c

18) c

19) b

20) b

Overhead Masters

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Objective 1:

Paraeducators will understand the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior and describing it in observable terms.

B 2-1

Reasons for gathering information:

- to determine factors associated with the behavior
- to determine if intervention is working
- to provide insight as to why behavior occurs so it can be changed

B 2-2

When gathering information, behaviors should be observable and described in measurable terms.

B 2-3

Objective 2:

Paraeducators will recognize various factors that occur prior to, during, and following challenging behaviors.

B 2-4

A functional assessment of behavior provides information about the behavioral support needs of individuals with challenging behavior.

Types of information to be gathered:

What happens before, during, and after behavior(s) (types, frequency, duration, intensity), setting events, other factors (physical, medical).

B 2-6

Behavior Game Scoring

Teams	Setting Events	Defining a Behavior	Communication of Behavior	Functional Assessment	"It's Not My Job"	Words that Begin with "d"
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

B 2-7

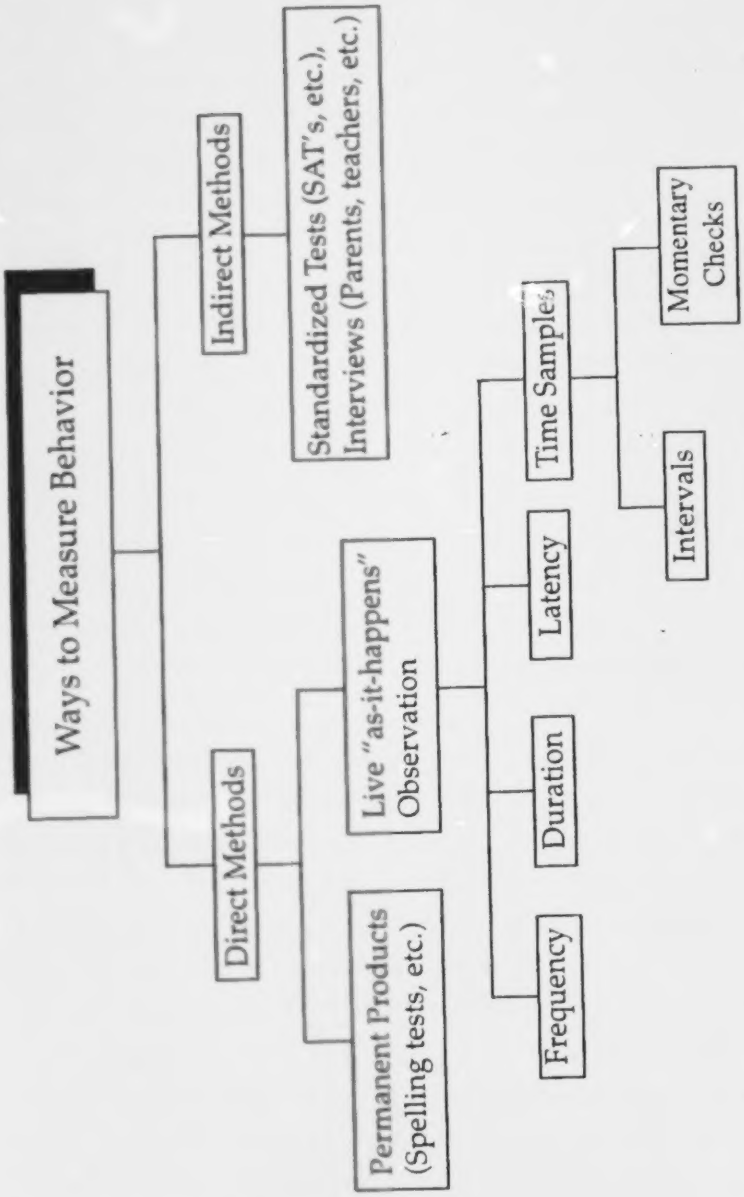
Objective 3: Paraeducators will learn various ways to gather and record information about challenging behavior.

B 2-8

ABC:

(A) Antecedents
(B) Behavior
(C) Consequences

B2-9



Ways to Measure Behavior

- Indirect Methods
  - Standardized Tests (SAT's, etc.), Interviews (Parents, teachers, etc.)
- Direct Methods
  - Permanent Products (Spelling tests, etc.)
  - Live "as-it-happens" Observation
    - Frequency
    - Duration
    - Latency
    - Time Samples
      - Intervals
      - Momentary Checks

B2-10

Unit 3

Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Instructor's Overview

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Brief Description of Unit

This unit provides information on ways to prevent challenging behaviors by addressing the psychological and academic needs of students. Paraeducators will become familiar with the components of a behavior support plan (i.e., prevention, teaching, and responding). Teaching alternative (or replacement) behaviors and social skills are also covered.

Hours of Instruction (in class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.)

1. Paraeducators will understand the components of a positive behavior support plan. (K)
2. Paraeducators will know factors that prevent challenging behaviors for students. (K)
3. Paraeducators will become familiar with the role of replacement behaviors as alternatives for challenging behaviors. (K)
4. Paraeducators will implement teacher-planned prevention strategies and support replacement behaviors (S).

Preparing For and Implementing the Unit

Required Readings (located only in the Participant's Manual):

Ayres, B., & Hedeen, D. (1997). Creating positive behavior supports. In M.F. Giangreco (Ed.). *Quick guides to inclusion: Ideas for educating students with disabilities* (pp. 113-139). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Backus, L. (2000). *Paraeducators' roles in preventing challenging behaviors and teaching replacement behavior*. (Unpublished manuscript). Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Ruef, M. (1997). *Positive behavior support: Strategies for teachers*. (pp. 10-28). Lawrence: University of Kansas, Beach Center on Families and Disability.

Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R. & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families to include students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education*. (pp. 57-79). Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Instructor Materials:

- Overhead projector & screen
- Unit 3 overheads (must be copied onto transparencies)
- Flip charts & markers

Instructor Preparation for Unit 3:

- Read the required readings (located only in the Participant's Manual) prior to the class.
- Gather all instructor materials.
- Consider the physical arrangement of the classroom to facilitate class activities.
- Review the practicum requirements for Unit 3.

Participant Preparation for Unit 3:

- Read the required readings **prior to class.**
- Based on the required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation, for discussion in class.
- Bring writing materials for note taking and activities to class.
- Review Practicum requirements for Unit 3.
- Bring the Participant Manual to class.

Instructor Implementation of Unit 3:

The unit includes an agenda with suggested timelines, lesson plan, required readings, a *Knowledge Review,* and practicum requirements to be completed in the educational setting. The agenda is located at the beginning of each unit. The activities are interspersed within the lesson plan. The *Knowledge Review* is located at the end of each unit.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed can be found at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating and approved by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) Attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Brendtro, L., & Brokenleg, M. (1993). Beyond the curriculum of control. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Problems, 1* (3), 5-11.

Faber, A., & Mazlish, E. (1982). *How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk.* NY: Avon Books.

Goldstein, A., Sprafkin, R., Gershaw, N.J., & Klein, P. (1980). *Skillstreaming the adolescent: A structured learning approach to teaching prosocial skills.* Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Janney, R., & Snell, M. (2000). *Behavioral support: Teachers' guides to inclusive practices.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Jones, V. & Jones, L. (1998). *Comprehensive classroom management: Creating communities of support and solving problems* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Kohn, A. (1995). *Beyond discipline: From compliance to community.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Mendler, A. (1992). *What do I do when? How to achieve discipline with dignity in the classroom.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Services.

Web sites

Beach Center on Families and Disability:
http://www.beachcenter.org

Council on Exceptional Children:
http://www.cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

National Education Service: http://www.nes.org

Videos

Bureau of Education & Research. (1999). *Making inclusion more successful: Practical behavior management strategies for the classroom* [Videotape]. Bellevue, WA: Author.

Committee for Children. (1997). *Check it out* [Videotape] to accompany *Second step: A violence prevention curriculum*, Seattle, WA: Author.

Curwin, R., & Mendler, A. (1997). *As tough as necessary: A discipline with dignity approach to countering aggression, hostility and violence*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

National Education Service (1996). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future* (video series). Bloomington, IN: Author.

Seeman, H. (1992). *Preventing classroom behavior problems.* NY: ProEducation Media.

Agenda

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors (3 hours)

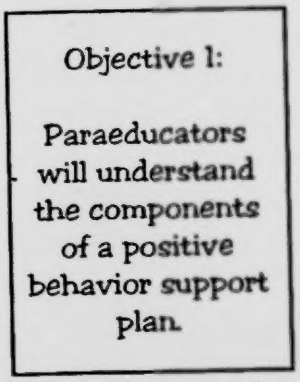
	Agenda item	Time
A1.	Positive Behavior Support Plans Introduce Objective 1 (1 min.) Information about Support Plans and Discussion Activity (14 min.)	15 min.
A2.	Prevention Strategies Introduce Objective 2 (1 min.) Information about Prevention Discussion (9 min.) Identifying Prevention Strategies Activity (20 min.) Using Prevention Strategies Activity (30 min)	60 min.
A3.	BREAK	15 min.
A4.	Promoting Replacement Behaviors Introduce Objective 3 (5 min.) Replacement Behavior Role-Play (40 min.) Discussion (15 min.)	60 min.
A5.	Knowledge Review	20 min.
A6.	Evaluation, Practicum, and Preparation for the Next Class	10 min.

Lesson Plan

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

A1 POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLANS (15 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B3-1)



Objective 1:

Paraeducators will understand the components of a positive behavior support plan.

Read Aloud

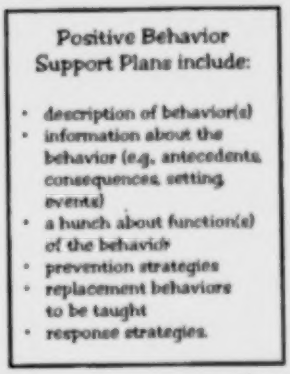
Objective 1: Paraeducators will understand the components of a positive behavior support plan.

Information about Support Plans and Discussion Activity (14 min)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

1. Refer participants to Chapter 5 in *Identifying Student Supports* from Topper et al. (1994).
2. Tell participants that this activity is designed to have them discuss positive behavior support plans in order to clarify any questions they may have from their readings. Encourage participants to refer to their readings as needed to participate in the discussion.
3. Review the components of a behavior support plan.

Show Overhead (OH B3-2)



Positive Behavior Support Plans include:

- description of behavior(s)
- information about the behavior (e.g. antecedents, consequences, setting events)
- a hunch about function(s) of the behavior
- prevention strategies
- replacement behaviors to be taught
- response strategies.

B3-2

Read Aloud

Positive behavior support plans include a description of and information about the behavior(s) to be changed, a hunch regarding the function of the behavior, prevention strategies, replacement behaviors to be taught, and response strategies.

Discussion Questions

1. Positive behavior support plans are different from many approaches used in the past. How are they different from plans you may have seen in the past?
2. Do they focus on increasing appropriate or eliminating challenging behaviors?
3. Are they focused on preventing challenging behaviors or on punishing them after they occur?
4. Do they focus on addressing the "functions" of behaviors or using external punishments and rewards?
5. Do they include teaching new skills to replace challenging behaviors or providing consequences to be applied after a challenging behavior is displayed?
6. Do they include strategies for the staff and faculty or only goals for the student?
7. In what ways might these differences affect how successful we are at addressing challenging behavior?

A2 PREVENTION STRATEGIES (60 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B3-3)

Objective 2:

Paraeducators will know factors that prevent challenging behavior for students.

B3-3

Read Aloud

Objective 2: Paraeducators will know factors that prevent challenging behavior for students.

Information about Prevention Discussion Activity (9 minutes)

1. Tell participants that this discussion is designed to help review prevention strategies. Encourage participants to ask questions based on the required readings for the class.

Show Overhead (OH B3-4)

Prevention strategies can include changes in:

- the physical environment
- the instructional environment
- the social environment

B3-4

Read Aloud

Prevention strategies can include changes in the physical environment, the instructional environment, or the social environment.

Show Overhead (OH B3-5)

Prevention strategies:

- are proactive
- minimize contact with events or activities that precede challenging behaviors
- provide an alternate way for a student to get his/her needs met.

B3-5

Read Aloud

Prevention strategies are proactive, they minimize contact with events or activities that precede challenging behaviors, and they provide an alternate way for students to get their needs met.

Show Overhead (OH B3-6)

Physical and environmental interventions:

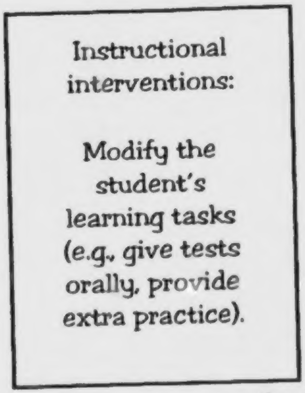
The student's physical setting is altered (e.g., seat placement is changed, have materials handy).

B3-6

Read Aloud

Physical and environmental interventions are those in which the student's physical setting is altered. For example, changing the student's seat placement or having materials handy.

Show Overhead (OH B3-7)



Instructional interventions:

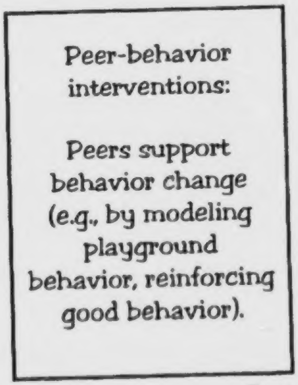
Modify the student's learning tasks (e.g., give tests orally, provide extra practice).

B3-7

Read Aloud

Instructional interventions are those that modify the student's learning tasks. For example, give a student a test orally or provide extra practice on a concept.

Show Overhead (OH B3-8)



Peer-behavior interventions:

Peers support behavior change (e.g., by modeling playground behavior, reinforcing good behavior).

B3-8

Read Aloud

Peer behavior interventions are those in which a student's peers have a role in supporting behavior change. For example, having peer playground buddies model following the rules for a game or having peers provide positive reinforcement for a positive behavior choice.

Show Overhead (OH B3-9)

Student initiated
interventions:

The student
has an active
role in the
strategy used
(e.g., self-
monitoring, self-
reinforcement).

B3-9

Read Aloud

Student-initiated interventions are those in which the student has an active role in the strategy being used. For example, a student monitors his own behavior goals or a student reinforces himself certain behaviors.

Identifying Prevention Strategies Activity (20 minutes)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

1. Divide participants into four groups. (There are four readings in the section).
2. Assign each group to review a designated reading in the Participant's Manual.
3. Give each group a large piece of easel paper.
4. Give each group 10 minutes to identify as many strategies as they can from their readings for preventing challenging behavior.
5. Ask each group to tape their poster paper to the wall in the front of the class so that all can observe them.
6. Ask participants to circulate and view the lists and to make checkmarks next to strategies they would like to try.

Discussion Questions (10 minutes)

1. Which strategies are most likely to succeed in the classroom?
2. How would you know?

3. Which strategies are easiest to implement?
4. Which strategies do you think will not work?
5. What other questions does this activity raise for you?

Using Prevention Strategies Activity (30 minutes)

1. Divide the participants into groups of four.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 3 Activity Sheets

2. Assign each group one Prevention Scenario from the Participant Manual Unit 3 Activity Sheets.
3. Have participants select a recorder for their group.
4. Tell participants that the student behaviors they are about to encounter have already been observed, and analyzed and the "functions" of the behaviors have already been determined.
5. Ask participants to brainstorm and list at least five strategies that could be used to prevent the challenging behavior. They should be given a time limit of 15 minutes for this section.
6. Once participants have brainstormed and listed prevention strategies, they should select their best three to present to the whole group.
7. Participants should read their selections and their favorite prevention strategies aloud to the class.
8. In addition to prevention strategies, ask the participants to identify new skills they think might be helpful for students to learn. Ask participants to identify at least one skill (e.g., a communication skill, a social skill) that might help the student in their scenario. (See the examples on next page.)

Activity Sheet

Prevention Scenarios (with examples)

1. Steven is in the 10th grade. He frequently argues with his World Civilization teacher whenever a controversial subject is brought up. It doesn't seem to matter what the topic is or which side the teacher presents, Steven always argues and must have the last word. If he feels he is losing the argument (that he started), he gets angry, threatening and sometimes leaves the room. Steven's team has gathered information about this behavior. They have identified that the function of the behavior is to gain a sense of control. What strategies in your readings might be useful to prevent this behavior from disrupting the class discussions?

   (Examples: At an appropriate time allow Steven to write a report on a topic of his choice; encourage Steven to lead a class discussion based on a topic of his choosing; teach him appropriate ways to discuss a topic in a conversational tone.)

2. When Casey, who is in 6th grade, has math worksheets to do she often "shuts down" and refuses to work. The team has determined that this behavior is a reflection of her desire to escape having to do work she perceives as too difficult. What strategies described in your readings might be useful to prevent this behavior from interfering with Casey's learning?

   (Examples: Break down the task into smaller pieces so as not to be overwhelming; give her a non-intrusive cue she can use when feeling overwhelmed; increase the ratio of positives to negatives in her feedback; make sure that the task starts off with problems that she can complete correctly; find out what types of problems interest her and intersperse those among the more difficult ones.)

3. Doria is twelve and newly arrived in this country. He speaks very little English and is unfamiliar with many facets of "pop" culture. He travels to school alone because he doesn't know anyone yet. He frequently plays "tough" on the playground and often interferes with games that other students are playing. After extensive observation and collection of information, Doria's team has determined that he engages in these behaviors to get attention from his peers. What prevention strategies described in your readings might be useful for Doria?

   (Examples: Develop a peer buddy system for him; identify a mentor who shares some of his interests; allow him to have an important/high-status job in the school; increase opportunities for him to share in activities in which he has strengths, e.g., soccer, basketball; teach him how to initiate conversations with peers.

4. In third grade, Harry was considered to be shy and withdrawn. But, this year in fourth grade, he has become the class clown. When there is a transition to a new activity, he often gets up and runs around the class, makes funny noises, giggles, etc. This behavior is especially pronounced whenever he has to perform something for the group (e.g., an individual reading or a role-play). Harry's team has collected data and found that this happens regularly before and after class and whenever the spotlight is on Harry. They have determined that he engages in these behaviors to escape uncomfortable social situations and to deflect attention from him to the jokes. What prevention strategies are outlined in your book that might prevent these disruptions?

   (Examples: Give him a routine to do each time there is a transition in classroom activities and have him practice these in a nonthreatening way; instead of presenting to the entire class allow them to share with two or three in a group; pair Harry with a buddy who can take the lead in role- play situations where Harry is to act as the behind-the-scene assistant; teach him how to recognize his anxiety and to relax; teach him to excuse himself when becoming too anxious; teach stress management)

5. Tapping his pencil, rocking and humming to himself is the way Karl takes tests. His rocking annoys other students to the point of distraction. At one point, his teacher removed him to the hallway, where he became so upset at being isolated that he ran away and refused to complete his work. He's received two detentions for this behavior already after being told to stop. He says he can't help himself. His team has determined that these behaviors occur to decrease his anxiety around tests and to relieve extra tension. Therefore, they are considered to be self-regulatory. What ideas might you find in the readings that could prevent these disruptive behaviors?

   (Examples: Allow him to use practice tests with a familiar format prior to the actual test; allow him to draw while taking his test or give him time to take a break; move his seat. Social skill: Teach him to do deep breathing and to reframe his anxious thoughts.)

A3 BREAK (15 min.)

A4 PROMOTING REPLACEMENT BEHAVIORS (60 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B3-10)

Objective 3:

Paraeducators will become familiar with the role of replacement behaviors as alternatives for challenging behaviors.

B3-10

Read Aloud

Objective 3: Paraeducators will become familiar with the role of replacement behaviors as alternatives for challenging behaviors.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 3 Activity Sheets: Replacement Behavior Role-play Agenda and Replacement Behaviors Role-play Scenarios.

Read Aloud

In your manual, in the Unit 3 required reading entitled "Select and Teach Replacement Behavior," you will find a list of different categories of skills that can be taught. These include areas of social relationships, self-management, study skills, and communication skills. You should refer to these when doing the next activity.

Replacement Behavior Role-Play Activity (40 min.)

1. Introduce the activity by telling participants that they will have a chance to practice working with students to teach replacement behaviors and social skills through a role-play situation.
2. Remind participants that they may want to refer to the categories of skills to be taught for this activity
3. Divide participants into three groups.
4. Assign each group a role-play situation to act out from the role-plays listed below.
5. Ask each group to complete the activity using the agenda below.

Replacemnt Behaviors Role-play Agenda (40 minutes)

Agenda Item	Time
1. Read your assigned role-play scenario (because of a social skill deficit, this student handles a situation poorly)	1 min.
2. Identify four actors from your groups, one of which is the student, and assign them parts in the scenario.	1 min.
3. From your readings on social skills and behaviors, identify the replacement (or social) skill that you want to teach.	7 min.
4. Identify a situation in which the replacement behavior is most likely to be needed.	1 min.
5. Create a role-play that illustrates the challenging behavior and your chosen replacement skill. Be sure to include the setting, scene, and dialogue.	15 min.
6. Act out the role-play for the class (about 5 minutes for each including discussion)	15 min.

Replacement Behavior Role-play Scenarios

ESCAPE: Students are seated in a 9th-grade mathematics class. The teacher asks the students to take out a piece of paper for a quiz in which they will need to explain in writing how to solve an equation. Sam is great at mathematics calculations but hates to write. If he needs to "write" answers he gets frustrated. Using language to explain something is not his idea of mathematics anyway. What makes things even more anxiety provoking is that he did not understand the lecture and the examples of equations today. He also forgot his book and is embarrassed to borrow a neighbor's pencil! It's all just too much for him, and he decides to shut down and not do *anything*. The teacher confronts him on why he's not doing any work at all and just sitting there. His response is, "Why should I? This is stupid–where did you learn math? People don't have to write in math–they do math. No wonder our test scores are so low compared to Japan!" Then after insulting the teacher he packs up his stuff and leaves the room disrupting everyone else in the class.

Examples: Role-play possible skills to teach or show: asking for help; planning ahead to bring materials; stress reduction; answering appropriately when being confronted with something.

ATTENTION: Mindy and Sara are 10th-grade girls who are sitting together and giggling in the cafeteria. Nora, a girl who is always in some kind of trouble, wants to join in the fun, interrupts them and sits down right across from them. When they ignore her she reaches across the table and takes their trays and purses. When they confront her with "hey" don't take that!" she begins teasing them with the items. They do not see this as funny and both lunge after her to get the purse and call her names to express their anger.

If you were to teach Nora some social skills to be used in this situation, what would they be? And how would you teach them?

Examples: Waiting until it's her turn to speak; interrupting in a polite way; asking to be seated; initiating conversation.

CONTROL: Andrew is an llth-grade student who cannot sing well or play an instrument. In his music class he constantly jokes around and creates disturbances. Today he has decided that he can get the entire class going (and not have to sing or read music!) by writing nasty things on the blackboard before class. He writes nasty things about the teacher, Mrs. Evans, and draws humorous pictures of her. The students are hysterical with laughter when she walks in; when she confronts him on his artwork, he sings a song in a loud (off key) voice so that no one else can sing. Then she asks him to leave, at which point he asks her to leave and refuses to go. The students are laughing even harder.

What kinds of social skills might you teach Andrew in order to be more successful in music and not have to disrupt the class?

Examples: Allow him to put together a skit or do drawing/painting for scenery for the upcoming musical; give him some choices about how he'll spend his time in class; teach him to express his frustration to the teacher in another way; allow him to get attention from the students in other more appropriate ways; give him a useful role/job).

?Q&A Discussion Questions (15 minutes)

1. Did you have difficulty deciding on replacement behaviors? Why or why not?
2. Was there any need to "punish" any of these behaviors in order to bring about change? Why or why not?
3. Do any of the students you work with have replacement behaviors as a strategy for addressing challenging behavior?

A5 KNOWLEDGE REVIEW (20 min.)

Knowledge Review Procedures

1. Provide accommodations that may affect participation in the *Knowledge Review* as needed.
2. Distribute the *Knowledge Reviews*.
3. Review the instructions for completion (which are found at the top of the *Knowledge Review*) including asking participants to put their names on their reviews.
4. Give participants 10 minutes to complete the *Knowledge Review* (plus additional time as needed to ensure that all participants have ample time to complete the review).
5. After all participants have completed the *Knowledge Review*, guide them (as a group) through correction of their own reviews using the following procedures:
   a) Ask for a volunteer to read the first question on the *Knowledge Review*.
   b) Next, ask for volunteers to answer that question (if no participant volunteers, provide the answer).
   c) Scoring:
   - If the participant's circled response is correct, nothing further is required.
   - If the participant's circled response is incorrect, the participant should mark a check to the left of the item number and underline the correct response.

EXAMPLE:

✓ 1. Paraeducators are:
   a) highly overpaid
   [✓ b) babysitters]
   c) important team members
   d) spies for the administration

   d) Explain why the answer is correct and ask the class if they have any further questions. All of the *Knowledge Review* items are found in the unit's required readings; therefore, you should be familiar with the required readings to answer participant questions.
   e) Repeat steps a-d for the remaining *Knowledge Review* items.
   f) Collect all the *Knowledge Reviews*.
   g) Follow the procedures for summarizing the *Knowledge Review* data.

A6 EVALUATION, PRACTICUM, AND PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT CLASS (10 min)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Practicum requirements section

1. Instruct participants to turn briefly to the practicum requirements section of the Participant Manual and ask if they have any questions about their practicum activities.
2. Assign the reading for the next class.
3. Ask the participants to complete the unit evaluation form and collect it along with the *Knowledge Reviews*.

Knowledge Review

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Site: ____________________

Instructor: ____________________

Directions: Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.

21. Over a long period of time, which of the following is the least effective in preventing misbehaviors from occurring?
    a) helping students minimize contact with activities that precede misbehaviors
    b) avoiding things that trigger misbehavior
    c) making changes in an environment so things are more predictable and less ambiguous
    d) informing students of the consequences they may face if they misbehave

22. For students who exhibit a challenging behavior as a way to get control, which strategy would be the most effective at preventing problems?
    a) excluding the student from class
    b) providing activities that are not stressful
    c) giving the student choices
    d) giving the student more attention

23. If the function of a student's behavior is to get attention, which of the following is most likely to prevent the behavior?
    a) ignore the attempts at getting attention
    b) punish the student when he/she engages in the behavior
    c) provide an alternative way for the student to get attention
    d) give the student stickers when he or she no longer needs attention

24. A good way to increase opportunities for getting attention include which of the following?
    a) encouraging students to join clubs
    b) adhering strictly to routines
    c) giving students flexibility in their schedule
    d) pointing out student mistakes while in large groups

25. An example of a physical/environmental prevention strategy is:
    a) improving mathematics skills
    b) limiting relationships with classmates
    c) changing a student's seating to allow more engagement with the curriculum
    d) increasing auditory processing skills

26. If a student misbehaves, "I-messages," interpretive feedback, and quiet messages are ways to:
    a) communicate with students without singling them out or embarrassing them
    b) assign blame and prevent future misbehaviors
    c) hold students accountable for their behavior
    d) teach other students a lesson about consequences of bad behavior.

27. Which of the following teaching styles is most likely to result in fewer challenging behaviors?
    a) authoritarian
    b) permissive
    c) apathetic
    d) democratic

28. What is the best way to teach a new behavior to replace a disruptive behavior?
    a) explaining to the student how to practice the new behavior
    b) reprimanding the student for using the old behavior
    c) showing and modeling how to do the new behavior
    d) informing the student of consequences for not performing the skill

29. Which of the following is an important set of social skills students might need to learn?
    a) how to avoid social situations
    b) how to outline and summarize a story
    c) how to control one's anger
    d) how to take notes in social sciences class

30. What element of good teaching is most important for students to generalize their new social skills to different settings?
    a) frequent modeling
    b) continually charting their behavior
    c) helping students use their new skills in other places
    d) taking away privileges when students don't use their new skills
    e) breaking the skills into small steps

21) d

22) c

23) c

24) a

25) c

26) a

27) d

28) c

29) c

30) c

Overhead Masters

Unit 3:
Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Objective 1:

Paraeducators will understand the components of a positive behavior support plan.

B 3-1

Positive Behavior Support Plans include:

- description of behavior(s)
- information about the behavior (e.g., antecedents, consequences, setting, events)
- a hunch about function(s) of the behavior
- prevention strategies
- replacement behaviors to be taught
- response strategies.

Objective 2:

Paraeducators will know factors that prevent challenging behavior for students.

B 3-3

Prevention strategies can include changes in:

- the physical environment
- the instructional environment
- the social environment

Prevention strategies:

- are proactive
- minimize contact with events or activities that precede challenging behaviors
- provide an alternate way for a student to get his/her needs met.

B 3-5

Physical and environmental interventions:

The student's physical setting is altered (e.g., seat placement is changed, have materials handy).

B 3-6

Instructional interventions:

Modify the student's learning tasks (e.g., give tests orally, provide extra practice).

B 3-7

Peer-behavior interventions:

Peers support behavior change (e.g., by modeling playground behavior, reinforcing good behavior).

B 3-8

Student initiated interventions:

The student has an active role in the strategy used (e.g., self-monitoring, self-reinforcement).

B 3-9

Objective 3:

Paraeducators will become familiar with the role of replacement behaviors as alternatives for challenging behaviors.

B 3-10

Unit 4:

Responding to Challenging Behavior

Instructor's Overview

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Brief Description of the Unit

This unit provides information for paraeducators on how to respond to misbehavior in ways that are effective and that avoid the conflict cycle. Information is provided on how to respond verbally in clear ways, how to avoid power struggles, and how to avoid counter-aggression.

Hours of Instruction (in class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.)

1. Paraeducators will learn clear and supportive responses to misbehavior. (K)
2. Paraeducators will learn about the conflict cycle. (K)
3. Paraeducators will learn ways to calm stressful or challenging behavior situations. (K)
4. Paraeducators will demonstrate ways to respond to misbehavior and to calm aggressive or challenging behavior situations. (S)

Preparing for and Implementing the Unit

Required Readings (located only in the Participant's Manual):

Backus, L. (2000). *Responding to challenging behavior.* (Unpublished manuscript.) Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Beach Center on Families and Disability. (1998). *Discipline and punishment* (handout) University of Kansas, Lawrence: Author.

Bondurant-Utz, J., Raimondi, S. & Smith, M. (1994). *Strategy profiles for teachers who work with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities* (pp. 13-14). Buffalo, NY: State University College at Buffalo.

Curwin, R. & Mendler, A. (1995). Discipline with dignity guide. In *Strategies for reaching disruptive and angry students: Creating caring communities* (pp. 25-30). Conference proceedings, Stowe, VT, July 1996. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Keogh, W. (1996). *Behavioral crises in schools: Some intervention strategies*. (Unpublished manuscript.) Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

National Education Service. (1996). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future: A facilitator's guide to the video series* (p. 96.) Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Vermont Department of Education. (1998). *Preventing and responding to school disruption and violence: Recommendations and guidelines of the task force on school violence* (pp. 5-6). Montpelier, VT: Author.

Instructor Materials:

- Overhead projector & screen
- Unit 4 overhead masters (must be copied onto transparencies)
- Flip charts & markers

Instructor Preparation for Unit 4:

- Read the required readings (located only in the Participant Manual) prior to the class.
- Gather all instructor materials.
- Consider the physical arrangement of the classroom to facilitate class activities.
- Review practicum requirements for Unit 4.

Participant Preparation for Unit 4:

- Read the required readings **prior to class.**
- Based on required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class
- Bring writing materials for note-taking and activities to class.
- Review Practicum requirements for Unit 4.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Instructor Implementation of Unit 4:

The unit includes an agenda with suggested timelines, lesson plan, required readings, a *Knowledge Review,* and practicum requirements to be completed in the educational setting. The agenda is located at the beginning of each unit. The activities are interspersed within the lesson plan. The *Knowledge Review* is located at the end of each unit.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed is located at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher. The negotiated requirement must be approved by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Charles, C.M. (1999). *Building classroom discipline* (6th ed.). New York: Longman.

Daniels, V. (1998). How to manage disruptive behavior in inclusive classrooms. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 30* (4) 26-30.

Jones, V. & Jones, L. (1998). *Comprehensive classroom management: Creating communities of support and solving problems* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Keating, B., Pickering, M., Slack, B. & White, J. (1990). *A guide to positive discipline*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Mendler, A. (1992). *What do I do when? How to achieve discipline with dignity in the classroom*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R. & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families to include students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education*. Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Web sites

Tri-State Consortium on Positive Behavior Supports:
http://www.positiveapproaches.org

Council for Exceptional Children:
http://www. cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:

http://www.ccbd.net
Parent/Teacher Organizations:
http://www. pta.org/programs/sfgrdtoc.htm

Crisis Prevention Institute:
http://www.crisisprevention.com

Videos

National Educational Service. (1995). *Discipline with dignity* [Video series]. Bloomington, IN: Author.

Cambridge Educational. (1998). *Conflict resolution series: Preventing violence.* [Video] Charleston, 0WV: Author.

Effective strategies for de-escalating elementary students. [Videotape]. Brookfield, WI: Crisis Prevention Institute.

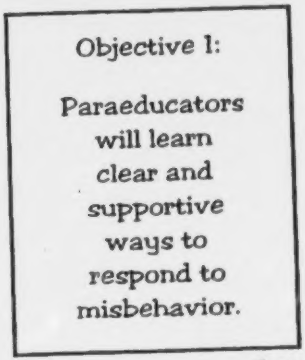
Agenda

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior (3 hours)

	Agenda Item	Time
A1.	Responding to Misbehavior	33 min.
	Introduce Objective (3 min.) PEP Message Activity (15 min.) Responding to Confrontation Activity (15 min.)	
A2.	Components of the Conflict Cycle	40 min.
	Introduce Objective and Conflict Cycle (5 min.) Strategies for Preventing Conflict Activity (10 min.) Conflict Resolution Activity Script (15 min.) Discussion (10 min.)	
A3.	BREAK	15 min.
A4.	Calming Challenging Behavior	62 min.
	Introduce Objective (2 min.) Avoid Escalating Activity (40 min.) De-escalating Activity (20 min.)	
A5.	Knowledge Review	20 min.
A6.	Evaluation, Practicum, and Preparation for the Next Class	10 min.

A1 RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR (33 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B4-1)



Objective 1:

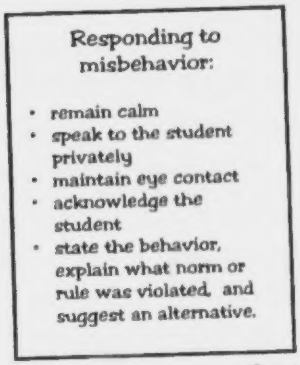
Paraeducators will learn clear and supportive ways to respond to misbehavior.

B4-1

Read Aloud

Objective 1: Paraeducators will learn clear and supportive responses to misbehavior.

Show Overhead (OH B4-2)



Responding to misbehavior:

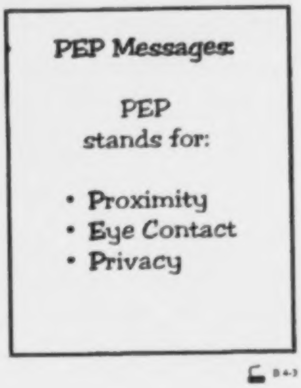
- remain calm
- speak to the student privately
- maintain eye contact
- acknowledge the student
- state the behavior, explain what norm or rule was violated, and suggest an alternative.

B4-2

Read Aloud

When responding to misbehavior, remain calm and speak directly to the student privately. Maintaining eye contact, state the behavior, explain what norm or rule was violated and suggest an alternative.

Show Overhead (OH B4-3)


PEP Messages:

PEP
stands for:

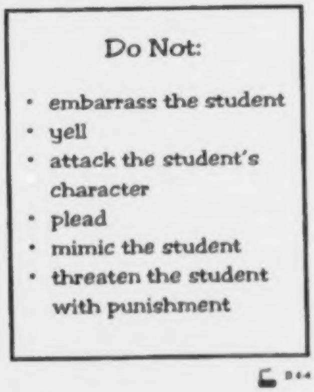
- Proximity
- Eye Contact
- Privacy

B4-3

Read Aloud

PEP Messages: PEP stands for proximity, eye contact and privacy. This is the best way to verbally address misbehavior because it avoids the conflict cycle. It does not make the student feel trapped, it does not humiliate him or her, and it provides information for how to correct the situation in a nonjudgmental way.

Show Overhead (OH B4-4)


Do Not:

- embarrass the student
- yell
- attack the student's character
- plead
- mimic the student
- threaten the student with punishment

B4-4

Read Aloud

Do not embarrass the student, yell, attack the student's character, plead, mimic the student, or threaten the student.

PEP Message Activity (15 min.)

Note to the Instructor

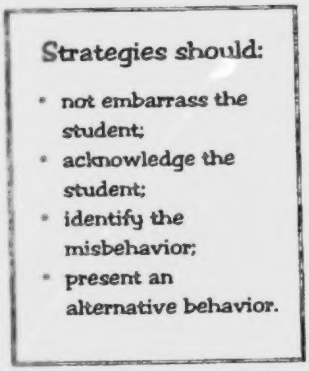
Participants will be role-playing a number of scenarios. They will be given brief descriptions of situations and should role-play them in small groups. Each role-play will require one or two students, a paraeducator and one or two observers. Since some groups will be doing more than one role-play, participants should be encouraged to rotate roles. Demonstrate the example role-play. Ask for two volunteers to be the "students" in the class.

1. Divide participants into groups of four.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

2. Assign each group a PEP scenario from the Participant Manual activity sheet.
3. Tell participants that each scenario describes a situation in which the paraeducator will need to intervene to prevent misbehavior by using preventive strategies. The strategies should include:

Show Overhead (OH B4-5)



Strategies should:

- not embarrass the student;
- acknowledge the student;
- identify the misbehavior;
- present an alternative behavior.

B4-5

Read Aloud

The strategies that you use for your scenario should not embarrass the student, should acknowledge the student, should identify the misbehavior of the student, and should present an alternative behavior to the student.

4. Ask for volunteers from the class to model the example role-play scenario (below) with you. Point out the preventive strategies used.
5. Give groups 8 minutes to develop and practice their role-plays.
6. Select two groups to present their role-plays to the class.
7. Have the participants who are watching the role-play identify the prevention strategies used. Use this discussion to clarify questions from participants.

PEP Scenarios

Example:
Setting: Students are seated in a circle. Situation: Two students are talking to each other as the paraeducator is circulating, checking seatwork. The paraeducator walks over to them, leans over privately, and says: "Girls, I know you are excited about the field trip tomorrow (acknowledgment), but we are doing our homework now. You're talking during work time (behavior and norm violation). I'd appreciate it if you'd focus on your work so it can be done before you go home (appropriate behavior). That way you'll be able to spend more time planning the field trip after school (alternative)."

1. Setting: Students are on the playground. Situation: One student is playing basketball and refuses to allow any other student to have the ball. You have been summoned to resolve this situation.
2. Setting: In the cafeteria line. Situation: You are on lunch duty. One student jumps in line in front of everyone else, and the other students begin complaining loudly.
3. Setting: In the hallway. Situation: You see two students sauntering down the hall wearing belt chains, which are forbidden.
4. Setting: In class, during a lecture. Situation: A student sits in the back of the room makes rude comments during the lecture.
5. Setting: Mathematics class. Situation: A student who does very poorly in math has just slammed his book shut, refused to do any work, and is mumbling under his breath.

Responding to Confrontation Activity (15 min.)

Read Aloud

Sometimes, even when a minor behavior problem is responded to appropriately, students will continue to try to engage in a power struggle. Sometimes they will become anxious or confrontational. When this happens, there are effective ways to respond that prevent conflict.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 4 Required Readings: Curwin and Mendler, *Nine Things to Say When Confronted.*

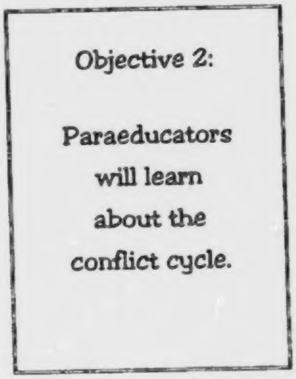
1. Divide participants into pairs.
2. Instruct participants to take turns being a paraeducator and a confrontational student.
3. Give each pair 10 minutes to select four responses to confrontation given in the Curwin & Mendler article and develop a scenario to practice using each of the responses.

Q&A Discussion Questions (5 min.)

1. How did you feel when you were the student confronting the paraeducator? Did what your partner say make you feel angrier? less angry?
2. As the paraeducator, do you feel that your response alienated or angered the student? Do you feel that it neutralized a potentially volatile situation?
3. In your own life, how do you respond to confrontation? What generally happens when you employ that strategy?

A2 COMPONENTS OF THE CONFLICT CYCLE (40 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B4-6)



Objective 2:

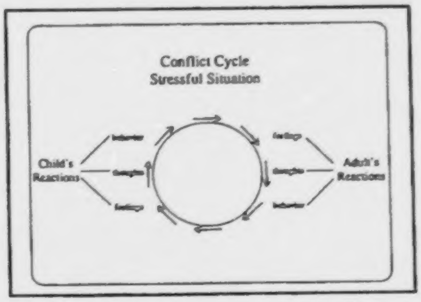
Paraeducators will learn about the conflict cycle.

B4-6

Read Aloud

Objective 2: Paraeducators will learn about the conflict cycle.

Show Overhead (OH B4-7)


Conflict Cycle
Stressful Situation
Child's Reactions
behavior
thoughts
feelings
feelings
thoughts
behavior
Adult's Reactions

OH B4-7

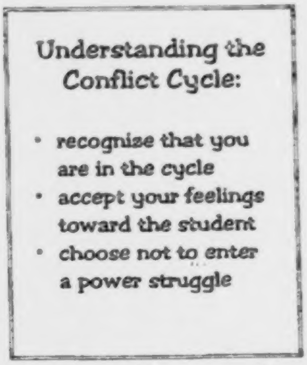
Read Aloud

Let's review the conflict cycle from your readings. You will recall that a conflict cycle occurs when a student reacts to a stressful event by misbehaving, and the adult, in turn, reacts in a similar way, taking on the student's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. When the adult acts in this way, it is called counter-aggressive. This often makes the student escalate his or her behavior. The cycle can continue until there are no winners, only losers.

Note to the instructor

You may wish to review some or all of the following strategies with the class. The strategies are taken from *Strategy Profile: The Conflict Cycle* reading in the Participant's Manual.

Show Overhead (OH B4-8)



Understanding the Conflict Cycle:

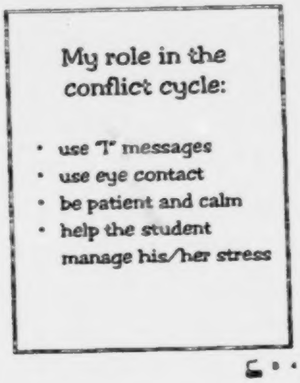
- recognize that you are in the cycle
- accept your feelings toward the student
- choose not to enter a power struggle

B 4-8

Read Aloud

Here are some of the strategies your reading suggested for understanding the conflict cycle. First, you need to be able to recognize that you are in the cycle. Next you need to accept your feelings towards the student. You then make a choice not to enter the power struggle.

Show Overhead (OH B4-9)



My role in the conflict cycle:

- use "I" messages
- use eye contact
- be patient and calm
- help the student manage his/her stress

B 4-9

Read Aloud

Once you have decided not to enter the conflict cycle, you can begin to take an active role with the student. When talking to the student it is important to use "I" messages and maintain eye contact. Be patient and calm and help the student manage his or her stress.

Strategies for Preventing Conflict Activity (10 min.)

1. Divide participants into groups of three or four.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 4 Required Readings

2. Ask participants to refer to their readings for Unit 4 to brainstorm additional strategies for their role in the conflict cycle. (5 minutes)
3. Ask each participant to think of a student with whom he/she engages in the conflict cycle and to choose a strategy from the brainstorming list that might prevent the conflict cycle. (2 minutes)
4. Ask participants to share their chosen strategy within their small group. (3 minutes)

Read Aloud

The strategies you identified are a valuable source of information about the students with whom you work. Share them with the students' team. One major part of a positive behavior support plan is a listing of "response" strategies that work with the student. In the meantime, it is your job to be aware of your own reaction to students who experience stress or engage in challenging behavior and to take steps to prevent the conflict cycle.

Conflict Resolution Activity Script (15 min.)

1. Divide participants into groups of three.

Read Aloud

Sometimes when students engage in conflict with one another, adults are pulled in to act as mediators or to solve the problem. This activity will help you to resolve conflicts between students.

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit Activity Sheet: Paraeducator Conflict Mediation Script

2. Ask participants to read the Paraeducator Conflict Mediation Script in their groups. (2 minutes)
3. Give each group 3 minutes to identify a typical situation that would lead to conflict among students. Then tell participants that they will use that situation as the basis for a role-play they will develop to practice use of the conflict mediation script.
4. Give participants 10 minutes to practice using the conflict mediation script in their groups.

Paraeducator Conflict Mediation Script

1. Introduce yourselves: "Hi, my name is __________."
2. Ask the parties: "Do you want to solve the problem with me or with the teacher?" If necessary, move to a quiet place to solve the problem.
3. Explain to the parties: "First, you have to agree to four rules":
   a. Agree to solve the problem.
   b. No name calling.
   c. Do not interrupt.
   d. Tell the truth.

4. Paraeducator #1 asks person #1: "What happened? How do you feel? Paraeducator #1 repeats what Person #1 says, using active listening: "So, what you're saying is…"
5. Paraeducator #2 asks person #2: "What happened? How do you feel?" Paraeducator #2 repeats what person #2 says, using active listening: "So, what you're saying is…"
6. Ask person #1: "Do you have a solution?" (May refer to the solution ideas below)
   Ask person #2: "Do you agree with the solution?"
   If no: "Do you have another solution?" and so on until disputants have reached a solution agreeable to both of them.
7. Have disputants tell each other what they have just agreed to: "So will you tell each other what you've agreed to?"
8. Congratulate them both: "Thank you for working so hard to solve your problem. Congratulations."

Solution Ideas

Share:	We can both do it
Take Turns:	We can do it your way this time, my way next time
Compromise:	Give up some—get some
Chance:	Flip a coin
Outside Help:	Let's ask a teammate, classmate, teacher
Postpone:	Later—when we cool down
Avoid:	Agree to disagree—with respect
Humor:	Is this important to Joe's turtle?

(adapted from Jones & Jones, 1998)

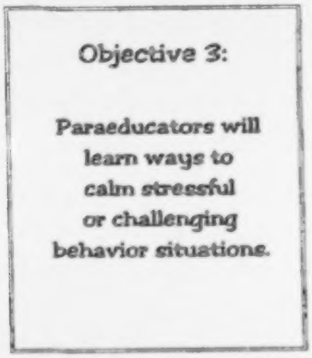
Q&A Discussion Questions (10 min.)

1. Students sometimes use their own strategies to solve their conflicts. Some of these include deciding to share, to take turns, to get an adult, to do something different, etc. What strategies have you seen students (or children) use on their own to solve conflicts?
2. What could you do to help students as they try to solve their own conflicts?

A2 BREAK (15 MIN.)

A4 CALMING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR (62 min.)

Show Overhead (OH B4-10)



Objective 3:

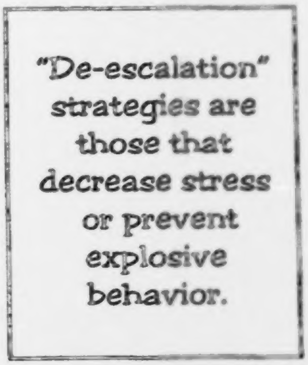
Paraeducators will learn ways to calm stressful or challenging behavior situations.

B 4-10

Read Aloud

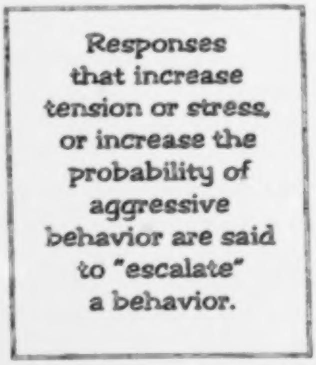
Objective 3: Paraeducators will learn ways to calm stressful or challenging behavior situations.

Show Overheads (OH B4-11 & B4-12)



"De-escalation" strategies are those that decrease stress or prevent explosive behavior.

B 4-11



Responses that increase tension or stress, or increase the probability of aggressive behavior are said to "escalate" a behavior.

B 4-12

Read Aloud

Responses that decrease stress can de-escalate or calm potentially explosive behavior.

Responses that increase tension or stress often escalate behaviors.

Avoiding Escalation Activity (40 min.)

1. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to become familiar with ways to de-escalate stressful or aggressive behavior and how to avoid escalating misbehavior. This activity works like charades. Participants act out or give clues to allow their teams to guess if they are escalating or de-escalating behavior. There are two rounds for each. During the first round, participants can give their team members verbal clues about what they are doing, in the second, they can only act out the idea.
2. Divide the class into two groups.
3. Give each person a small slip of paper.
4. Designate one team to be the de-escalation team (Team D) and one to be the escalation team (Team E)
5. Tell Team E members to each write one idea of how to escalate behavior.
6. Tell Team D members to each write one idea or strategy that de-escalates stress or aggressive behavior.
7. Share some examples with participants:

   Escalating:
   yelling at students
   standing with arms folded
   finger-pointing
   bringing up unrelated events
   nagging
   bribing
   pleading
   ignoring

   De-escalating:
   remaining calm
   speaking softly
   using "I" messages
   deep breathing
   using quiet messages

8. Tell both teams to put their slips of paper into a single pile.
9. Tell Team D to choose one participant to select a slip of paper from the pile at random. This person should verbally describe the idea on the paper without using any of the words on the slip of paper (e.g., if the idea is "Using I messages" the participant might say "don't use the word 'you' when giving this feedback"). The participant's team (D) has one minute to guess which strategy is being described (escalating or de-escalating). This process continues until 10 minutes have passed or all of the slips of paper have been guessed. The team should total the number of slips of paper that were guessed correctly.
10. Team E (Escalation) repeats the process using the same slips of paper until 10 minutes have passed or all of the slips of paper have been used. The team should total the number of slips of paper that were guessed correctly.
11. The team that has correctly guessed the most strategies wins the round.

12. In round two, the slips are put back into the pile and this time, individuals must act them out (as in charades). They are not permitted to say anything. Team D should begin the round using the same procedure as before modifying giving clues using actions instead of words. The participant's team (D) has one minute to guess which strategy is being acted-out (escalating or de-escalating). This process continues until 10 minutes have passed or all of the slips of paper have been guessed. The team should total the number of slips of paper that were guessed correctly.
13. Team E (Escalation) repeats the process using the same slips of paper until 10 minutes have passed or all of the slips of paper have been used. The team should total the number of slips of paper that were guessed correctly.
14. The team that has correctly guessed the most strategies wins the round.

De-escalating Activity (20 min.)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Unit 4 Required Readings: Behavioral Crises in Schools

1. Give participants 5 minutes to review the different crisis levels in the reading by Keogh (1996).
2. Have participants identify which crisis levels the students they work with engage in and what interventions are used by the student's team. (5 minutes)
3. Have participants mark a check by any interventions that are not being used by the student's team but that they would like to share with team members for consideration (5 minutes).

Discussion Questions (5 minutes)

1. What crisis interventions are generally used by the team to support the students that you work with?
2. What other strategies did you identify to share with the team?
3. Given all the work we've done today around response strategies, what do you think is the most important response strategies you will use?

A5 KNOWLEDGE REVIEW (20 min.)

Knowledge Review Procedures

1. Provide accommodations that may affect participation in the *Knowledge Review* as needed.
2. Distribute the *Knowledge Reviews*.
3. Review the instructions for completion (which are found at the top of the *Knowledge Review*) including asking participants to put their names on their reviews.
4. Give participants 10 minutes to complete the *Knowledge Review* (plus additional time as needed to ensure that all participants have ample time to complete the review).
5. After all participants have completed the *Knowledge Review,* guide them (as a group) through correction of their own reviews using the following procedures:
   a) Ask for a volunteer to read the first question on the *Knowledge Review.*
   b) Next, ask for volunteers to answer that question (if no participant volunteers, provide the answer).
   c) Scoring:
   - If the participant's circled response is correct, nothing further is required.
   - If the participant's circled response is incorrect, the participant should mark a check to the left of the item number and underline the correct response.

EXAMPLE:

✓ 1. Paraeducators are:
a) highly overpaid
[✓ b)] babysitters
c) important team members
d) spies for the administration

   d) Explain why the answer is correct and ask the class if they have any further questions. All of the *Knowledge Review* items are found in the unit's required readings; therefore, you should be familiar with the required readings to answer participant questions.
   e) Repeat steps a-d for the remaining *Knowledge Review* items.
   f) Collect all the *Knowledge Reviews*.
   g) Follow the procedures for summarizing the *Knowledge Review* data.

A6 EVALUATION, PRACTICUM, AND PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT CLASS (10 min.)

Refer to the Participant's Manual

Practicum requirements section

1. Instruct participants to turn briefly to the practicum requirements section of the Participant's Manual and ask if they have any questions about their practicum activities.
2. Assign the reading for the next class.
3. Ask the participants to complete the unit evaluation form and collect it along with the *Knowledge Reviews.*

Knowledge Review

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Name:

Date:

Site:

Instructor:

Directions: *Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.*

31 Some things paraeducators should know in order to respond to individual student behaviors include:
  a) the classroom expectations and rules regarding behavior
  b) students' learning and communication styles
  c) when and how to defer to the classroom teacher when responding to misbehavior
  d) all of the above
  e) a and b only

32. In an initial response to a misbehavior, a paraeducator should:
  a) ignore the misbehavior
  b) speak to the student calmly and privately
  c) reprimand him or her publicly
  d) warn the student about possible consequences

33. In the middle of a lesson, the best way to deal with power struggles is to:
  a) ignore the student
  b) try to win the argument at all costs
  c) allow the student to give reasons for the behavior
  d) acknowledge there is a problem and make a plan to resolve the problem outside of class

34. Which of the following is NOT a good idea after a student has engaged in a challenging behavior?
  a) demand immediate resolution and a public apology
  b) provide support during the difficult time so no one is harmed
  c) think of a creative way to engage the student in the activity at hand so teaching can continue
  d) assist the student in calming down

35. In order to prevent a challenging behavior from escalating and to avoid the conflict cycle, which of the following responses would be recommended?
   a) Insist on having the last word, you cannot lose face.
   b) Give the student a clear choice: "Either stop the behavior or be punished."
   c) Mimic the student so he/she understands what the behavior looks like.
   d) Speak calmly and directly to the student, say what the behavior is, that it is unacceptable and suggest an alternative.

36. Which of the following is **not** recommended when encountering a conflict between two students?
   a) Invite the disputants to a quiet, neutral area to work things out.
   b) Encourage them to take turns listening.
   c) Focus on common interests.
   d) Determine who is "at fault."

37. Why is punishment **not** a long-term effective solution for responding to misbehavior?
   a) It doesn't teach a better way to behave.
   b) Children often become more aggressive when in punitive settings.
   c) Punishment does not address the underlying reason for the behavior.
   d) The person applying the punishment becomes aversive to the student.
   e) all of the above.

38. When responding to misbehavior, what does PEP stand for?
   a) planning, energy, and practice
   b) proximity, eye contact, and privacy
   c) prediction, engagement, and punishment
   d) punishment, effectiveness, and professionality

39. In a behavior crisis, behaving professionally means:
   a) keeping a hands-off approach
   b) making sure that your authority is not questioned
   c) forcing the student to be compliant
   d) resisting the urge to respond to aggression with aggression

40. If a student is exploding and out of control behaviorally, what generally happens if a paraeducator shows anger, and threatens the student (e.g., "I'll show him who's in charge here")?
   a) The student immediately understands the inappropriateness of the behavior and calms down
   b) The behavior escalates
   c) The probability of that behavior occurring again is decreased
   d) The student is able to change the behavior because he or she has been shown the limits.

31) d

32) b

33) d

34) a

35) d

36) d

37) e

38) b

39) d

40) b

Overhead Masters

Unit 4:
Responding to Challenging Behaviors

Objective 1:

Paraeducators will learn clear and supportive ways to respond to misbehavior.

B 4 - 1

Responding to misbehavior:

- remain calm
- speak to the student privately
- maintain eye contact
- acknowledge the student
- state the behavior, explain what norm or rule was violated, and suggest an alternative.

B 4 - 2

PEP Messages:

PEP
stands for:

- **P**roximity
- **E**ye Contact
- **P**rivacy

Do Not:

- embarrass the student
- yell
- attack the student's character
- plead
- mimic the student
- threaten the student with punishment

Strategies should:

- not embarrass the student;
- acknowledge the student;
- identify the misbehavior;
- present an alternative behavior.

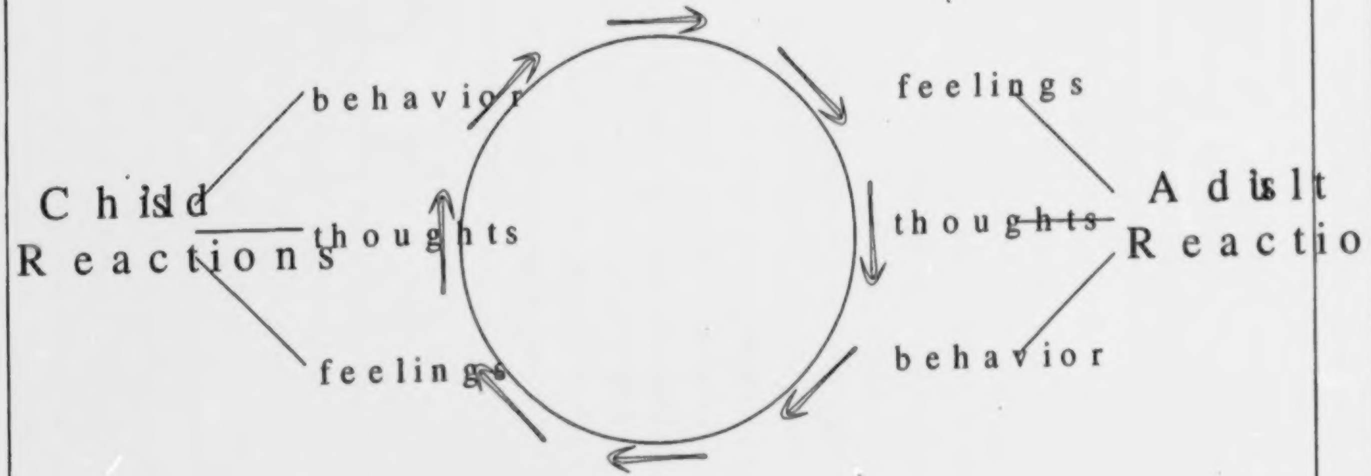
B 4 - 5

Objective 2:

Paraeducators will learn about the conflict cycle.

B 4-6

Conflict Cycle
Stressful Situation



Child Reactions

behavior

thoughts

feelings

feelings

thoughts

behavior

Adult Reactio

Understanding the Conflict Cycle:

- recognize that you are in the cycle
- accept your feelings toward the student
- choose not to enter a power struggle

My role in the conflict cycle:

- use "I" messages
- use eye contact
- be patient and calm
- help the student manage his/her stress

Objective 3:

Paraeducators will learn ways to calm stressful or challenging behavior situations.

"De-escalation" strategies are those that decrease stress or prevent explosive behavior.

B 4-11

Responses that increase tension or stress, or increase the probability of aggressive behavior are said to "escalate" a behavior.

Forms

Participant Registration Form

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Directions: Please fill in the following personal information. In order to participate in the *Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum,* you must also have a signed commitment from a cooperating teacher at a school site to work with you on practicum requirements, and signed permission from the principal to work on practicum requirements. It is your responsibility to locate a cooperating teacher, provide him or her with the Cooperating Teacher Responsibility form , locate your principal, and obtain both their signatures on this registration form.

Participant personal information:

Name: ____

Mailing address: ____________________________________

____

____

Phone: ______________________ Fax: ______________________

E-mail: ____

School name and address: ______________________________

____

____

Number of years experience as a paraeducator: ______________

Do you have any special needs (e.g., large-print materials, Braille, testing or seating accommodations) that must be addressed for you to participate in this course?

____

____

____

____

Participant Registration Form (continued)

***Cooperating Teacher Statement of Commitment:**

Name of the cooperating teacher for your practicum:

____

I have read the Cooperating Teacher Responsibility Form, and I agree to work with

____

(paraeducator's name)

as his/her practicum Cooperating Teacher for the

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

____

cooperating teacher signature)

Principal Sign off:

I, ________________________________ agree to

(principal's name)

have the above student complete his/her practicum requirements in my school.

____

(principal's signature)

*attached:

1. Practicum Requirements (to give to the cooperating teacher)
2. Cooperating Teacher Responsibility Form

Cooperating Teacher Responsibility Form

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

As a cooperating teacher, you will be responsible for working with the paraeducator to ensure completion of the attached practicum requirements. There are a total of 4 practicum requirements (attached), which have been designed to be completed by the paraeducator in 10 hours on the job. Your responsibilities include:

- discussing each practicum requirement with the paraeducator;
- working with the paraeducator to develop a new practicum requirement to replace any practicum requirement that is not appropriate for the paraeducator's school situation;
- observing the paraeducator as he/she completes each practicum requirement;
- checking off each practicum requirement that the paraeducator completes;
- signing the practicum requirements when the paraeducator has completed all of them.

If you have any questions about the practicum requirements, you may contact the course instructor at:

____

____

____

____

____

(name, address, phone, and e-mail of the course instructor)

Practicum Requirement
Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to review the individual student support plan (behavior plan) for a student with whom they work who has challenging behaviors (Note: The student who is chosen for this practicum requirement will also be the focus of the practicum requirements for Units 2, 3, and 4.)

b) The paraeducator will review the student support plan to identify the four primary components of the plan: target behaviors, prevention strategies, replacement behaviors, and response strategies. These components will be recorded on the following page.

c) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to identify his/her role in carrying out the components of the student support plan. The paraeducator and cooperating teacher may refer to the paraeducator's role regarding student behavior located in the reading "Understanding Student Behavior" by Backus in the Participant's Manual to help identify ways that the paraeducator may support positive behaviors.

d) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will identify and outline one role (identified above) that the paraeducator will focus on (e.g., to learn more about, to target for change, to define more clearly) for carrying out the student support plan. The paraeducator will record the role on the following page. The cooperating teacher will mark a check in the box above to indicate that the paraeducator has completed this practicum requirement.

Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ______________________

Cooperating Teacher: ______________________
(signature)

Date completed: ______________________

Student Support Plan

Target Behaviors:

Prevention Strategies:

Replacement Behaviors:

Response Strategies:

Paraeducator's Role for Carrying Out Components of the Student Support Plan:

Practicum Requirement
Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to identify a frequently occurring behavior (a behavior that happens more than once a day) of the student with behavior challenges who was chosen in the practicum requirement for Unit 1. The paraeducator will observe that behavior at least three times on the same day or over a period of time.

b) The observation should include three components: 1) a description of the chosen behavior; 2) a description of what happens **before** the behavior; 3) description of what happens **after** the behavior. The paraeducator will record the observation using the ABC Observation Data Sheet located in the Participant's Manual.

c) The paraeducator will summarize the observation data in a scatter plot format (refer to the Foster-Johnson & Dunlap, 1993, reading located in the Participant's Manual for an example of a scatter plot). This will require observing a student for part of each day over a three-day period, and writing down how frequently the student engages in the behavior in each of at least three classes.

d) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss results from the observation using the observation sheet and the scatter plot. The discussion may include suggestions for ways to improve data collection, factors that may contribute to the behavior (including what happens before and after the behavior), and patterns noted in the scatter plot summary. They should also discuss the best way to collect and report information about the behavior of students. The cooperating teacher will mark a check in the box above to indicate that the paraeducator has completed this practicum requirement.

Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ______________________

Cooperating Teacher: ______________________
(signature)

Date completed: ______________________

Practicum Requirement
Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Note: The paraeducator will choose **ONE** of the practicum requirements listed below to complete for Unit 3.

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss prevention strategies for the student with challenging behaviors identified in the practicum requirement for Unit 1.

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher should begin the prevention strategy with a review of the data collected in the practicum requirement for Unit 2. Next, the paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will review the **communicative function** of the behavior chosen in the practicum requirement for Unit 2.

c) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will use the support strategies for **preventing** problem behaviors (located in each of the required readings in Unit 3 of the Participant's Manual) to select the strategies that respond to the particular communicative function discussed in step "b" above.

d) The paraeducator will record the identified strategies for preventing problem behavior, which the paraeducator is responsible for helping to implement below. The cooperating teacher will mark a check next to the strategy to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated it.

Identified Strategies for Preventing Problem Behavior

____

____

____

____

____

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to review replacement behaviors for the behavior selected in the practicum requirement for Unit 2 (refer to the reading by Topper, Williams, Leo, Hamilton & Fox, "Example of Additional Skill Areas to Be Taught." Figure 6.1, located in the Participant's Manual).

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will identify the paraeducator's role in supporting the replacement behaviors (e.g., modeling replacement behaviors, reinforcing replacement behaviors, helping the student to practice replacement behaviors).

c) The paraeducator will record his/her role in supporting replacement behaviors below, and the cooperating teacher will mark a check next to the role to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated that role.

Paraeducator's Role in Supporting Replacement Behaviors:

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ______________________________

Cooperating Teacher: ______________________________

(signature)

Date completed: ______________________________

Practicum Requirement
Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss the paraeducator's role in **responding** to the student's challenging behavior.

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher should review the reading by Curwin and Mendler located in the Participant's Manual, and select two strategies for responding to challenging behavior, which the paraeducator will demonstrate while working with an individual or group of students.

c) The paraeducator will record the strategies below, and the cooperating teacher will mark a check next to each strategy to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated that strategy.

Paraeducator's Response Strategies to Student's Challenging Behavior

____

____

____

____

____

Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ____________________

Cooperating Teacher: ____________________
(signature)

Date completed: ____________________

Participant Course Information

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Dear Course Participant,
The course you have registered for, Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum, will meet on the following schedule:

Dates: ______________________________

Times: ______________________________

Location: ______________________________

The course instructor is: ______________________________

The instructor can be contacted at: ______________________________

Phone: ______________ Fax: ____________ E-mail: ______________

Address: ______________________________

You must obtain a Participant's Manual so you can complete Unit 1 readings **prior to the first class.** You can obtain your Participant's Manual by one of these two options.

1. Instructor's Plan: ______________________________

____

OR

2. By contacting:

National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM)
Oklahoma State University
5202 Richmond Hill Drive
Stillwater, OK 74078-4080
800-223-5219 (toll free)
405-624-7650 (phone)
405-624-3156 (TDD)
405-624-0695 (fax)
www.nchrtm.okstate.edu

REQUEST: PARTICIPANT MANUAL 650.050B

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

This manual is available on a cost-recovery basis.

Unit 1 Instructor Evaluation

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior
Instructor name: ____________________
Date: ____________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   ☐ very important
   ☐ important
   ☐ somewhat important
   ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   ☐ very relevant
   ☐ relevant
   ☐ somewhat relevant
   ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   ☐ very understandable
   ☐ understandable
   ☐ somewhat understandable
   ☐ not understandable

4. How **helpful** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   ☐ very helpful
   ☐ helpful
   ☐ somewhat helpful
   ☐ not helpful

5. How **understandable** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   ☐ very understandable
   ☐ understandable
   ☐ somewhat understandable
   ☐ not understandable

6. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

7. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

8. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

9. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

10. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
    - ☐ very understandable
    - ☐ understandable
    - ☐ somewhat understandable
    - ☐ not understandable

11. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Unit 2 Instructor Evaluation

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Instructor name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   - ☐ very important
   - ☐ important
   - ☐ somewhat important
   - ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

4. How **helpful** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   - ☐ very helpful
   - ☐ helpful
   - ☐ somewhat helpful
   - ☐ not helpful

5. How **understandable** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

6. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
☐ very useful
☐ useful
☐ somewhat useful
☐ not useful

7. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
☐ very understandable
☐ understandable
☐ somewhat understandable
☐ not understandable

8. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
☐ very high quality
☐ high quality
☐ fair quality
☐ poor quality

9. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
☐ very relevant
☐ relevant
☐ somewhat relevant
☐ not relevant

10. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
☐ very understandable
☐ understandable
☐ somewhat understandable
☐ not understandable

11. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Unit 3 Instructor Evaluation

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors
Instructor name: ______________________________
Date: ______________________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   - ☐ very important
   - ☐ important
   - ☐ somewhat important
   - ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

4. How **helpful** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   - ☐ very helpful
   - ☐ helpful
   - ☐ somewhat helpful
   - ☐ not helpful

5. How **understandable** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

6. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

7. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

8. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

9. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

10. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
    - ☐ very understandable
    - ☐ understandable
    - ☐ somewhat understandable
    - ☐ not understandable

11. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Unit 4 Instructor Evaluation

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior
Instructor name: ____________________
Date: ____________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   ☐ very important
   ☐ important
   ☐ somewhat important
   ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   ☐ very relevant
   ☐ relevant
   ☐ somewhat relevant
   ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   ☐ very understandable
   ☐ understandable
   ☐ somewhat understandable
   ☐ not understandable

4. How **helpful** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   ☐ very helpful
   ☐ helpful
   ☐ somewhat helpful
   ☐ not helpful

5. How **understandable** was the lesson plan for this unit?
   ☐ very understandable
   ☐ understandable
   ☐ somewhat understandable
   ☐ not understandable

6. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

7. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

8. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

9. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

10. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
    - ☐ very understandable
    - ☐ understandable
    - ☐ somewhat understandable
    - ☐ not understandable

11. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Certificate of Completion

for

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

This certifies that ________________________ has completed all of the required class activities, *Knowledge Reviews,* and practicum requirements for Supporting Students with Challenging Behavior: A Paraeducator Curriculum given by

____

(school/institution providing training)

____

(dates)

____

(Instructor's signature)

650.050B

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors

— A Paraeducator Curriculum —

Participant's Manual

Linda Backus
Eileen CichoskiKelly

Field Test Version 2.0 June 2001 Feedback is requested

EC 309355

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U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

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Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Participant's Manual

Linda Backus
Eileen CichoskiKelly

Center on Disability and Community Inclusion
The University Affiliated Program of Vermont
University of Vermont

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Acknowledgments

A number of people deserve a special thanks for contributing to the development and field testing of *Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum.* Significant content contributions to the curriculum were made by Julie Welkowitz and Bill Keogh of the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion at the University of Vermont. Michael Giangreco, project director, provided conceptual guidance, feedback, editing, and continual support. Priscilla Sherman-Tucker assisted by providing us with the paraeducator viewpoint, along with assistance in content and training activities. Pam Spinney and Susan Cano, members of the Vermont Department of Education, provided a policy perspective in the initial draft of the document. Sincere appreciation goes to members of our advisory council, colleagues, school staff, and families for their ideas and support. We are also grateful to Trinity College of Vermont for sponsoring the first field test of this work and providing helpful feedback. Finally, we wish to extend a special thanks to Christina LeBeau and Stephen Doll, our project support partners, for their many hours of editing and compiling this curriculum. Yannis Mavropoulos edited and prepared materials for our web site. Michaella Collins, as usual, is to be commended for her detailed layout and design work.

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Introduction

Overall Purpose of the Curriculum

Student behavior is a primary concern of most personnel who work in education. A national survey of paraeducator training needs reported that classroom teachers, special educators, and paraeducators identified addressing student behavior as a significant challenge (CichoskiKelly, Giangreco, Backus & Tucker, 1998). This curriculum was developed with the recognition that paraeducators interact with students on a day-to-day basis in many school environments. Their participation as members of educational teams is invaluable, and their involvement in various aspects of supporting students with challenging behaviors is often crucial. Yet, too often, they find themselves struggling for answers and wanting more strategies for how to be more effective at preventing and responding to behavioral challenges.

From the revolutionary ideas drawn from applied behavior analysis to the current multifaceted approaches termed *positive behavior supports*, new and more effective strategies have been developed to prevent, replace, and respond to challenging behaviors.

Although the importance of addressing paraprofessional training has long been recognized, this aspect of education for students with disabilities has received additional attention in the field because of new legislation. The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997* (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) requires that state education agencies "establish and maintain standards" to ensure that paraprofessionals who assist in the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities are appropriately and adequately prepared, "trained, and supervised in accordance with State law, regulations, or written policy" [20 U.S.C. 1412 § 612(15)]. In other words, IDEA requires states to ensure that "qualified personnel" are available to assist in educating students who have disabilities; this includes paraprofessionals, hereafter referred to as paraeducators. IDEA also requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to ensure that all personnel working with students with disabilities are "appropriately and adequately prepared" [20 U.S.C. 1412 § 613 (a) (3)].

In an effort to address certain aspects of this requirement, this curriculum provides training content, formats, and a framework to ensure that paraeducators have the basic knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the education of students with disabilities in general educational settings. Paraeducators certainly have important input into the process and are often responsible for modeling and reinforcing new skills, implementing prevention strategies, and attending to the social and educational needs of students. These are important factors to consider in addressing behavior; however, it should not be the responsibility of paraeducators, singularly or primarily, to be responsible for addressing challenging behaviors of students. The professional staff, in collaboration with the family, is responsible for decision making and planning to address significant behavioral challenges.

In addition to the legal impetus for increased focus on paraeducator training, our understanding of behavior has changed significantly over the past 30 years. From the revolutionary ideas drawn from applied behavior analysis (Baer, Wolfe & Risley, 1968) to the current multifaceted approaches termed "positive behavior supports" (Carr, Horner, Turnbull et al., 1999; O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Story & Sprague, 1997), new and more effective strategies have been developed to prevent, replace, and respond to challenging behaviors. The concepts of positive behavior supports and inclusive education (McGregor & Vogelsberg, 1998), community-based and "wrap-around" approaches (Burchard & Clark, 1990) have allowed students to succeed within general education environments who might previously have had less than successful educational experiences. But, in order for these new approaches to be effective, teams, including paraeducators, need to know how to use them.

This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the prerequisite entry-level training course *Paraeducator Entry-Level Training for Supporting Students with Disabilities*. Effective approaches to supporting students who may have challenging behavior are all grounded in a framework of collaboration among professionals, students, and family members; the development of informal supports; family and cultural sensitivity; and the roles of paraeducators and other qualified professionals.

This curriculum is designed to inform paraeducators who work with a wide range of students with disabilities, including students with emotional disturbances. It is important to remember that each student is unique and that no one approach works for all students. This curriculum provides some general guidelines that will help teams in their collaborative planning process.

Philosophical Foundation for This Training

Creating inclusive classrooms for students with disabilities requires personnel, including paraeducators, to acquire skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge that explicitly pertain to the context of general education. Inclusive settings require personnel to take on a variety of new roles as well as to collaborate and communicate among various professionals, including general educators. Paraeducators in inclusive settings need to know how to promote peer interaction and positive interdependence between students with and without disabilities. They need to develop competence in working with diverse groups of students who exhibit varied learning styles within general education settings and who are pursuing differing, individually appropriate, learning outcomes within the same classroom activities. They need to understand and respond to challenging behavior in effective, positive, and proactive ways. Many paraeducators feel ill-prepared to handle the content, social dynamics, and behavioral challenges that need to be addressed within general education classrooms. Similarly, many classroom teachers have received minimal, training, if any, in how to mentor paraeducators.

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum is based on a number of assumptions. We believe that challenging behaviors (indeed, all behaviors) are related to context and serve a function for the student. We recognize that effective interventions are based on a thorough understanding of the student and the social, environmental, and personal influences on his or her behavior, and we believe that a strength-based approach that includes preferences, interests and capacities has the most potential to bring about positive behavior change. Behavior support planning ideally should take place collaboratively within the context of a team of individuals who provide support for the student. It is a proactive approach that focuses on prevention and teaching of replacement behaviors.

This curriculum emphasizes the unique nature of the paraeducator's *"assistance"* in implementing instruction designed by teachers, special educators, and related service providers. We believe that assessment, curricular design and adaptation, and primary instruction are roles of certified educators, special educators, and related service personnel. Therefore, another tenet of our philosophy is that we *do not expect a paraeducator to be the exclusive or primary teacher for students with a disability label.* Students with disabilities deserve to be educated by qualified professionals in their neighborhood schools, just like students without disabilities. At the same time, we recognize that paraeducators play a vital support role in many classrooms—their work should be recognized and appreciated. We believe it is important for roles to be clearly defined and for paraeducators to learn the skills most necessary to contribute to a positive, supportive inclusive educational experience for children and youth without usurping or substituting for the role of classroom teacher or special educator.

In addition, we recognize the wide array of roles and responsibilities that paraeducators are being asked to fulfill and we question whether they can be expected to meet this ever expanding set of demands without adequate training, support, or compensation. At times paraeducators are unfairly expected to do the work of teachers–in such cases we consider whether training is really the answer or whether other models of service delivery (e.g., hiring more qualified teachers; differentiating teacher roles) may be more appropriate (Giangreco, Broer, & Edelman, 1999). We have also been guided by the principles presented in the article, "Developing a Shared Understanding: Paraeducator Supports for Students with Disabilities in General Education" (Giangreco et al., 1999).

Intended Audience

This curriculum is intended for use by paraeducators who work with students with disabilities in general education and community settings who have behavioral challenges. It is meant to address the initial training needs of paraeducators working with students across the age span and is generically applicable for those working with students who have various types of disabilities. The curriculum is primarily geared toward use in general education schools and classrooms, although the content is also applicable to community or employment settings where people with disabilities are included with people who do not have disabilities. The required readings and varied formats contribute to its potential use in urban, suburban, rural, and remote areas. But, like any training program, it should be tailored to meet local conditions. Because this program is designed for national dissemination, specific state and local regulations, policies, and procedures are not included. The instructor or sponsoring agency should supplement this program with any necessary information specific to local situations.

Formats of Training

The needs of school districts to train paraeducators vary. Therefore, training formats must be flexible. The content in this curriculum is designed to be offered in different formats to meet differing needs. Each format includes a mechanism for evaluation and a practicum component. Each can also be adapted for continuing education or university credit.

Course Format

The traditional course format includes required readings and materials for a trainer, face-to-face sessions with participants, written materials and traditional methods of interaction (e.g., group discussions, presentations, group and individual activities). This format can be provided in various ways. It can be delivered regionally or within a single district or school. It can be delivered in an intensive (e.g., full-week) format or spread over a number of weeks. The program is not dependent on outside trainers and is appropriate for use by qualified school personnel (e.g., special educators, school psychologists, and staff development specialists) who have skills related to supporting students with challenging behaviors.

Though we have designed all our courses to be completed in 12 to 18 hours of instruction and 10 to 12 hours of practicum, you may decide to extend these times to add depth to the experience. You may add time for involving guest instructors in your class such as parents who have children with disabilities, self-advocates or professionals who have special expertise related to the unit of study. This option can be offered to groups ranging from 5 to 25 participants. Depending on the delivery format selected, local trainers may be asked to do this training within the context of their existing job responsibilities or be compensated for additional time spent beyond their contracted duties.

Formats Relying on Technology

Project staff are exploring the use of technology (e.g. interactive video, internet courses, and CD-ROM) as an option for offering courses to paraeducators who lack access to traditional courses because of issues such as scheduling conflicts or transportation barriers. As information becomes available about these options it will be posted on our web site: http://www. uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep/.

Basis for the Course

A number of foundational sources of information informed the development of this curriculum. They include:

- a review and summary of existing paraeducator training curricula;
- a review of published paraeducator literature from 1990 to 1999 (both data based and non-data based)
- a review of paraeducator Dissertation Abstracts from 1992 to 1999;
- a national survey of perceived training needs and priorities for paraeducators and their mentors that was completed by a variety of stakeholder groups (e.g., parents, paraeducators, special educators, classroom teachers, related services providers, state education staff, school administrators);
- input from a National Advisory Council made up of paraeducators, principals, students, parents, and state education personnel; and
- a review of the positive behavioral support literature and input from practitioners in the field.

Course Content and Organization

This "mini-course" is part of a series of courses for training paraeducators. Mini-courses follow a six unit prerequisite course entitled *Paraeducator Entry-Level Training for Supporting Students with Disabilities*. This course is designed to be completed in the following four, 3-hour classes:

Unit 1	Understanding Student Behavior
Unit 2	Gathering Information About Challenging Behavior
Unit 3	Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors
Unit 4	Responding to Challenging Behavior

Practicum Requirements

Ten hours of practicum activities are included in the mini-course and are appropriate for implementation within a general education setting. The practicum requires that paraeducators conduct these activities under the direction of an educator willing to support the participant and provide feedback on the activities. Practicum activities and evaluation forms are included as part of the training package. Participants also have the option of negotiating alternative practicum requirements with their cooperating teacher.

Other Content Training for Paraeducators

Currently, two more mini-courses are being developed. Each consists of 12 hours of classroom instruction and 10 hours of practicum.

Mini-Course 2	Supporting Students with Low Incidence Disabilities
Mini-Course 3	Implementing and Monitoring Teacher-Planned Instruction

Check our web site: http://www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep/ for information on the status of these courses and for links to courses offered online by other organizations on other important topics such as assistive technology and literacy.

Limitations of This Training Series

Our experience tells us that when people hear about a new training program for paraeducators, they become very interested because the need is obvious and extensive. While this and other training programs can certainly assist schools in developing a more qualified work force, they are not like magic wands that once passed over them will transform untrained assistants into highly competent teachers. In fact, this curriculum is intentionally not designed to prepare paraeducators to become teachers, or to teach paraeducators how to engage in planning that is the responsibility of qualified professionals. Likewise, it is not intended to substitute for an individual district's ongoing orientation, on-the-job training, and supervision of paraeducators. It is merely one piece of the paraeducator puzzle.

No training program will solve all the problems related to service delivery, instruction, classroom management, and other important issues affecting student learning. This training program, like many programs, is brief and therefore focuses on the most essential learning outcomes needed by paraeducators. It does not replace local training in specific skills, for specific settings (e.g., a specific reading or mathematics program; information uniquely associated with individual students).

In addition, it does not substitute for the daily and ongoing on-the-job support and mentoring that can be provided only by local school personnel.

Additional Training Resources

If you want to go further in depth, supplemental resources are listed at the end of each unit. These include references for books and articles, videos, and web addresses of interest. Other training resources are also listed at this project's web site: http://www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/paraprep/. This site also lists important updates to the curriculum. These include new activities, corrections, and more recent information useful for instruction.

Or you may visit our companion web site at:
http://www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/parasupport/

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How to Use this Participant's Manual

This manual includes all of the information the participant needs to take the mini-course *Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum*. The first step recommended to the participant is to read the manual in order to become familiar with it. This section is designed to facilitate this process.

The course is divided into four units, and each unit contains:
- an overview
- required readings
- activity sheets
- *Knowledge Review* questions
- Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary
- Unit Evaluation Form

The Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary provides a brief summary of the unit and its practicum requirements. Copy and give these to your cooperating teacher. For your own use, a listing of practicum requirements for each unit are located in the last section of the manual.

How to use the overviews

Use overviews to prepare for a specific class. Each overview contains:
- a brief description of the unit
- the number of hours of instruction
- the unit objectives, identified as knowledge (K) or skill (S) objectives.
- the participant preparation needed (e.g., reading the required readings)
- a practicum requirement overview
- an evaluation of participant learning
- suggested supplemental resources (provided for participants who wish to have more information than what is provided in the required readings)

How to use the required readings

- Each unit of the curriculum contains required readings that include information about the unit topic.
- The required readings for each unit must be completed prior to the class for that unit. Class activities and *Knowledge Review* questions are based on information in the required readings.

- Prepare at least two questions based on the required readings for each unit and bring those questions to class.
- Bring your copy of this manual to each class. Certain class activities will require you to refer to the required readings in this manual.

How to use the activity sheets

- This manual contains activity sheets for each unit that correspond to the lesson activities in the Instructor's Manual.
- You **do not** need to review the activity sheets before class, since the activities will be completed in class.
- Bring this manual to class in order to complete the activity sheets during class.

Information about the *Knowledge Review*

- The *Knowledge Review* for each unit contains ten questions based on information in the required readings of that unit.
- You are encouraged to use the questions as a study guide as you prepare for the class (e.g., review the questions as you read the required readings).
- The instructor will ask you to complete the *Knowledge Review* questions for the unit at the end of each class.
- The instructor will provide special accommodations for participants who need them to participate in the *Knowledge Review* . It is your responsibility to notify the instructor if you need special accommodations (e.g., extra time to complete the *Knowledge Review*, a seat in the front of the class).
- After all participants have completed the *Knowledge Review*, the class will review the questions and their answers. At that time, you are responsible for asking about any questions that you did not answer correctly.
- The *Knowledge Review* will be used as part of your evaluation for the mini-course.

How to use the practicum requirement checklists

- Review the practicum requirements for each unit before that class.
- Ask any questions about the practicum requirements during the practicum review time at the end of class.
- You may complete the practicum requirements in a time frame that fits your work schedule; however, all practicum requirements must be completed in the time frame negotiated by the class and your instructor.

- It is important that you understand the practicum requirements and have a plan for implementing them with your cooperating teacher, especially if you will not begin the practicum requirements until you have completed the course.
- If you feel that certain practicum requirements are not appropriate for your school site, you may negotiate more suitable requirements with your cooperating teacher.
- For any new practicum requirement, you must receive written approval from the class instructor, which may be accomplished by submitting the newly negotiated requirement in writing to your instructor.
- To ensure that you are working with your cooperating teacher, your practicum requirements checklist must include your cooperating teacher's signature for each skill that has been "checked" as completed.
- You are responsible for turning in the completed practicum checklist to the instructor at the end of each class, within one week after completing the practicum requirements.
- Participants who complete practicum requirements after the course is finished may turn in practicum checklists by mail within one week after completing the practicum requirements.
- The instructor will keep the practicum checklists for each participant.
- The instructor will issue a *Certificate of Completion* to all participants who have completed all of the course requirements.
- Attendance in class is a requirement for obtaining a *Certificate of Completion*. You must meet with your instructor to arrange makeup work if you miss a class.

Unit 1:

Understanding Student Behavior

Participant's Overview

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

Brief Description of Unit

This unit provides information about challenging student behavior including factors that affect it and how such behavior can be changed in positive, productive ways. The concept of "positive behavior supports" for students with challenging behavior is introduced. Characteristics of students with specific behavioral or emotional challenges (e.g., externalizing and internalizing behaviors) are briefly described. Paraeducators' roles regarding student behavior are discussed within the context of their legal and ethical responsibilities.

Hours of Instruction (In class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.)

1. Paraeducators will understand types of behavior challenges and how behavior affects a student's education. (K)
2. Paraeducators will learn about positive behavior supports and the function(s) of behavior for students with challenging behavior. (K)
3. Paraeducators will understand their role(s) when working with children with challenging behaviors. (K)
4. Paraeducators will demonstrate how their role(s) can support students with challenging behaviors. (S)

Preparing for the Unit

Required Readings:

Backus, L. (2000). *Understanding student behavior.* (Unpublished Manuscript.) Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Beach Center on Families and Disability. (1998). The story of Samantha in *Success stories: Positive behavioral support in action* (pp. 8-11). University of Kansas, Lawrence: Author.

Participant Preparation for Unit 1:

- Read the required readings **prior to class.**
- Based on the required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class.
- Bring writing materials for note-taking and activities to class.
- Review practicum requirements for Unit 1.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed and the skills to be observed can be found at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher and approval by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Bambara, L.M., & Knoster, T. (1998). Designing positive behavior support plans. *Innovations, (13.)*. Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

Janney, R., & Snell, M. (2000). *Behavior support: Teachers' guides to inclusive practices.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Lovett, H. (1997). *Learning to listen: Positive approaches and people with difficult behavior.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Web Sites:

Children, Youth and Families Educational Resource Network:
http://www.cyfernet.org/profdata/

Council for Exceptional Children:
http://www.cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities:
http://www.nichcy.org

Parent-Teacher Associations:
http://www.pta.org/programs/sfgrdtoc.htm

Tri-State Consortium on Positive Behavior Supports:
http://www.positiveapproaches.org

Video:

Samantha: A story about positive behavioral support. [Video] Center on Human Development and Disability. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.

Unit 1 Required Readings

Understanding Student Behavior

The following readings provide information important to paraeducators who want to have a better understanding of how to address the needs of students who exhibit challenging behaviors in schools.

The first reading describes the range of behaviors exhibited by children, how challenging behaviors are classified, and why some children are considered to have emotional and behavioral disorders or disabilities. This reading includes a brief description of "positive behavior supports" and a discussion of how learning about the functions of behavior helps educators decide on the types of prevention strategies, replacement behaviors, and other responses that may be most effective for a particular child. Within the reading, a chart lists the common behaviors associated with communicative functions. This is important when trying to put a particular behavior in context in order to understand, or prevent it. The reading ends with specific information about the roles of paraeducators and with some legal and ethical guidelines you may want to consider.

The second reading, "The Story of Samantha" (Beach Center, 1998), contains an excellent example of how a team, trying to understand what Samantha's behavior communicated, developed a positive plan for change that allowed her to succeed in school despite a serious behavioral disability. It provides a glimpse of what is possible when we understand the nature of behavior, the functions that behaviors serve, how to systematically measure behaviors, and how to develop prevention and replacement strategies for challenging behaviors.

Understanding Student Behavior

Linda Backus

Center on Disability and Community Inclusion
The University Affiliated Program of Vermont
Burlington, Vermont (2000)

The Importance of Understanding Student Behavior

Everything a child does can be thought of as behavior. When he or she learns a new skill, laughs at something funny, or communicates with words, different behaviors are being exhibited. Parents and educators alike believe that one of their primary goals is to shape a child's behaviors and learning experiences so that he or she may become a productive, empathic, happy child and, ultimately, adult. Behaviors that interfere with relationships or learning can be described as ineffective, disruptive, or dangerous.

A general term used to describe difficult or unproductive behavior is "challenging." Most children at one time or another exhibit sporadic incidents of challenging behaviors (e.g., temper tantrums, communication difficulties, lack of social skills, giggling in class). For many, these are temporary and part of normal development. But, for some, the frequency and intensity may become so severe that parents or teachers seek help. These children may be considered to have an emotional or behavioral "disorder," as defined by psychologists. Such disorders are organized into different categories and vary widely. Some may be considered "emotional disturbances," which are "disabilities" under the federal special education law (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, or IDEA). Students with an emotional disturbance need specialized supports, instruction, or accommodations in school and are eligible to receive special education services. In general, in order to be considered eligible for special education services as a student with an emotional disturbance, the challenging behaviors must be chronic, be intense, and interfere significantly with learning.

The important processes of "evaluation" and "assessment" of such students are conducted by qualified professionals. These are systematic ways of gathering information that are used to consider patterns of behaviors, to learn about how to prevent or intervene with the behaviors, and to clarify whether a student's behaviors may be considered a disability.

In addition to that formal evaluation, much observational information must be gathered by the team in the school environment, a process termed a "functional assessment." A functional assessment identifies the behaviors of concern, their possible causes, and any useful approaches for working with the student. Paraeducators may be involved at many levels of this process. Although it is the role of a qualified professional to decide whether a child has a disability and to determine what interventions are needed, paraeducators may be asked to collect information about student behavior. They may also implement some of the prevention or teaching strategies identified for the student. The paraeducator will undoubtedly want to know the most effective ways to respond to any challenging behaviors.

Common Types of Behavior Challenges

There are many types of challenging behaviors. Some children may be hyperactive or impulsive or have problems with attention. Others may be socially withdrawn, and still others, aggressive. A few students may exhibit delayed development or significant communication difficulties or other characteristics that interfere with social interaction. Some might be experiencing stressful or difficult situations in their lives. But, for all of these students, how adults respond and work with them can make a positive difference in their school experience.

According to Hales and Hales (1995) who summarized emotional and behavioral disabilities in children, those disabilities can be grouped into three main categories: *attention problems, externalizing behaviors* and *internalizing disorders*. We have included, in addition, a brief description of one type of *developmental disorder*, autism, in this section. It is important to keep in mind that very few, if any, children fit neatly into any one of these categories. It is also important to keep in mind that many challenging behaviors, at one time or another (at some level), are exhibited by children who do not have disabilities.

Attention Problems

Some students have difficulty paying attention to important things in their environment. This may happen to such a degree that the difficulty attending interferes with the student's learning new things or functioning well in school. Sometimes this behavior may be termed (by a pediatrician) *attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)*. Children with this behavior may have difficulty listening to and following through on instructions, fail to finish schoolwork, or have difficulty organizing tasks and materials. Some students may also seem impulsive and extremely active. They may fidget, squirm, and talk out excessively. They may have difficulty sharing and waiting and may interrupt others frequently. More boys than girls are generally considered to have attention problems. Physical or biological factors may contribute to distractibility; therefore, watching their sleep, exercise, health, and nutrition patterns may be useful. Although there is no single known cause, there is evidence that prenatal exposure to infections, alcohol, or certain environmental factors that affect development of the systems that regulate movement may play a part. Often, transitions and stresses experienced by the child make things worse.

Children with attention problems often need more help with challenging behaviors than other students. Helpful approaches may include teaching organizational skills, creating calming environments, reducing distractions while learning, and teaching relaxation skills.

Externalizing Behaviors

Some youngsters exhibit a pattern of being uncooperative, disobedient, or hostile. They may frequently be negative and provocative and take offense at others. Such behaviors are grouped under this heading because they can usually be seen or observed; they are external. It may seem that children with these behaviors deliberately try to annoy people (however, this may be more of an expression of their feelings or their lack of coping skills). A number of common terms are used to describe this category of behavior. At its mildest, children may experience normal irritability and a negative temperament. This is more likely to occur during adolescence. At the other end of the spectrum, students may be diagnosed as having *oppositional defiant disorder*, which is a pattern of negative, hostile, or defiant behavior (e.g., tantrums, noncompliance, being argumentative). *A conduct disorder*, involves violation of social norms by such behavior as deceitfulness and stealing. Because of their difficulty tolerating frustration or delaying gratification, these students are often irritable, may bully others, or may engage in delinquent or aggressive behaviors. Educational approaches often consist of a variety of mental health supports, such as behavior management, teaching problem solving, conflict resolution, family support services, and close supervision.

Internal Emotional States

Like adults, children can have mood swings. However, some students experience depressive symptoms or anxiety that becomes overwhelming and chronic to the point of affecting school functioning, or they may develop a fear of school. Unfortunately, these students are often overlooked in school because they are not engaging in attention-getting or aggressive behavior (although some students who are aggressive may also be depressed). These students may be irritable, discouraged, and self-critical. They may stop taking part in school activities, feel tired all the time, and be restless even though they sleep more than usual. Children who experience anxiety or depression may experience intense fears and unrealistic worry that is so severe that it affects school functioning. If a student is extremely self-conscious, seems tense and unable to relax, or is afraid of new situations and other people, he or she may need support. Helpful techniques include relaxation skills, coping strategies, gradual exposure to feared events, assertiveness training, and behavioral techniques. Children can learn to stop negative thinking and can use positive "self-talk" to calm themselves.

Developmental Disabilities

Many types of developmental disabilities impair language, communication, or cognitive skills. Students who lack these skills may become frustrated because they cannot communicate their needs. They may develop challenging behaviors that serve a function for them. Some of these children seem to live in a world of their own, unable to connect with other people. They may prefer not to interact or play with others. Some may experience significant difficulties in communication or delayed or repetitive movements. Over-sensitivity to various kinds of stimulation (noises, lights, temperature) may be exhibited. These factors help describe a type of disability called autism. Autism is a disability generally evident before the age of 3 that significantly affects a student's verbal and nonverbal communication and social interactions and has a negative impact on educational performance (*Federal Register*, section 300.7, p. 1242). Students with autism may exhibit behaviors that are disruptive or that interfere with their learning. Many techniques (e.g., giving picture cues for schedules, using symbols for communication, breaking tasks into smaller pieces) are used to adapt environments and instruction so that these students may have their needs met in ways that maximize their ability to communicate and interact with others.

Effective Approaches for Addressing Challenging Behavior

In recent years new approaches to supporting students with challenging behaviors have emerged. In the past, tools that parents and teachers used to change behavior relied heavily on punishment. Parents and teachers spent a great deal of time and energy reacting to unwanted behaviors. Today, a more comprehensive and preventive approach to changing behavior is favored. The newer approach is termed *positive behavior support*, which refers to ways of preventing challenging behaviors by changing the environment, teaching the skills and responses a student needs to be more effective, and responding to negative behaviors in ways that are humane, educational and productive (Carr, et al., 1999). This model is also called "prevention/teaching/and responding" (Hamilton et al., 1995). As a paraeducator, you will have many opportunities to assist in carrying out parts of this model.

There are many reasons that we need to help children who exhibit challenging behaviors. Often, students who have behavioral difficulties in school are excluded and isolated from friends and peers or they may miss out on school work because they are removed from classes or spending time in planning and time-out rooms. Their self-esteem may be adversely affected. They may begin to dislike school or lose motivation and interest in school. They may begin to feel incapable of controlling their environment. They may feel anxiety, failure, and a sense of hostility that spirals into more educational failure. This is why early intervention and careful and systematic support for these children are important.

What Causes Challenging Behavior?

In the past, the "cause" of behavior problems was often seen as the child, who needed to be "fixed." Clinical interventions, punishments, and treatments were aimed solely at changing the child. Today, the focus is not just on the child, but also on the host of factors that may contribute to the mismatch between a child's behaviors and the demands of his or her environment. Indeed, interventions today are much more comprehensive and may include family, community, peer group, environmental, and social variables. However, a good basic understanding of behaviors and what causes them is important for learning how to change them. One primary assumption that is helpful when learning about behavior is that it is usually learned and usually serves a function for the person. It is "telling us something." Generally, that "something" is about a need that is not being met.

The following excerpt from Ayres & Hedeen (1997) explains why it is important to think about behavior as having meaning and conveying a message to you.

Consider the Message Behind the Behavior:

Although you might feel that the student in your classroom who has difficult behaviors is sometimes deliberately trying to "ruin your day," behaviors usually serve a more specific purpose for the child and make perfect sense to her. Some students have limited language or have learned to use behaviors to "make things happen" in their school or home environments or both. There are a number of different messages that are communicated through the use of behaviors.

First, the student may be using the behavior to tell you that she needs your attention. For example, if a child wants you to come to her right away, what might be the most effective approach – waiting quietly at the desk or pushing over the desk? Second, a student might want to escape an activity because she is bored or finds it too difficult. If the student pushes materials off the desk, your current response might be to have her take a "time-out," which allows her to effectively get out of the tasks through the use of her behavior. Third, the behavior might serve a play function. The student might be thinking, "It just feels good to do this behavior, it is entertaining, and I can get a reaction

> *from the adults in the classroom, too!" Fourth, the child might use the behavior for self-regulation. That is, the behavior might help the student focus, slow down or speed up (e.g., rocking, foot tapping).*
>
> *The goal in identifying the communicative intent of behavior is to identify alternative positive skills to be taught to replace that behavior. So, the student who pulls hair or clothing in an effort to get the attention of classmates is actively taught to tap them on the shoulder to initiate an interaction. (p. 125)*

In addition to communicating something, behaviors are usually influenced by their context (or environment). What happens before and after behaviors can affect them. Things that happen before the behavior are called *antecedents* and things that happen after the behavior are called *consequences*. Understanding these variables makes it possible to guess at the purpose of the behavior. When we combine our knowledge of what precedes a behavior, what "function" it serves (or what message it is conveying), and what happens after it occurs, we might see patterns that allow us to prevent it or minimize its occurrences. In the next unit you will learn ways to collect information about these factors and about how this information can be used by the educational team to plan for a student.

To summarize, there are many reasons children (and adults) engage in certain behaviors. These are generally termed the "functions" or "communication" of behavior. The primary reasons children engage in disruptive or difficult behaviors include:

- Attention: Students may be disruptive or misbehave in order to get your attention or the attention of others. They may want to increase their sense of belonging to a group.
- Escape/avoidance: Students may misbehave to escape or avoid a situation, if they are uncomfortable in social situations, find the work boring or too hard, or are somehow intimidated or afraid.
- Control: Some students lack any sense of independence or control in their lives and will engage in power struggles in an attempt to exert some power or control over others. Sometimes they engage in these behaviors to get something they want.
- Self-regulation/coping: Some students are overstimulated by their environment or cannot calm down or cope with stress they may be feeling. Other students are understimulated.
- Play: Students have a developmental need to have fun and to play, and sometimes disrupting a class can be funny or playful (although it may seem inappropriate to an adult).
- Revenge: A student may become hurtful or act sullen or become angry for what seems like no apparent reason but is because of past experiences or perceived unfairness or mistreatment by others.

The chart on the next two pages (Topper, Williams, Leo, Hamilton & Fox, 1994) explains more about some of the origins of these behaviors, along with descriptions of what specific behaviors may look like. In summary, giving students with challenging behaviors positive behavioral support means gathering information about why these behaviors occur (by making a functional assessment), determining ways to prevent these behaviors, teaching alternatives (or replacement) behavior and developing effective response strategies.

Source: Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R., & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families to include students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education.* (pp. 50-51) Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 4.1

COMMON BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH COMMUNICATION CATEGORY

Attention

Possible Origins of Behavior

- Adults pay more attention to inappropriate than appropriate behaviors
- Student doesn't know how to ask for attention appropriately
- Student doesn't get sufficient personal attention
- Student has few friends
- Student has low self-esteem

Student Behavior:

- The behavior distracts teacher and classmates
- Behavior occurs when no one is paying attention to the student
- Behavior occurs when someone stops paying attention to the student
- Behavior occurs when attention is paid to someone other than the student
- Behavior occurs in front of valued peers
- Behavior occurs as a dare or result of peer pressure

Escape/Avoidance

Possible Origins of Behavior

- Unreasonable expectations by others
- Student's belief that only perfection is acceptable. Star mentality
- Emphasis on competition in the classroom
- Failure to be avoided at all costs
- The work is too difficult for the student

Student Behavior:

- Student does behavior when pressured to succeed
- Student procrastinates, fails to complete projects
- Student develops temporary incapacity or assumes behaviors that resemble a learning disability
- Student develops physical complaints
- The behavior occurs when the student is asked to do something she does not like to do
- The behavior stops after you stop making demands
- The behavior occurs in stressful situations

Control

Possible Origins of Behavior

- Society stresses dominant-submissive roles rather than equality in relationships
- Success is defined as achieving personal power
- Lack of control in person's life
- Past history of abuse/victimization

Student Behavior:

- When doing the behavior the student is disruptive and confrontational
- Quiet noncompliance — when doing the behavior the student is often pleasant and even agreeable
- Behavior occurs when an activity or event is taken away
- Behavior stops when student gets her way

Figure 4.1 continued

COMMON BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH COMMUNICATION CATEGORY

Revenge:

Possible Origins of Behavior:

- A reflection of the increasing violence in society
- Media role models that solve conflicts by force
- Unjust society. Unequal treatment.
- Anger over personal circumstances or past "wrongs"
- Provocation by another
- Jealousy

Student Behavior:

- Behavior is hurtful
- Student is sullen and withdrawn, refusing overtures of friendship
- The student does not show remorse following behavior
- The behavior occurs after you take something away
- The behavior occurs after you require the student to do an unwanted activity.
- The student stops the behavior only when she wants
- Student expresses concerns about "fairness"
- Behavior is directed at person who is perceived as more "valued" by others

Self-Regulation

Possible Origins of Behavior:

- Has not learned alternative ways of coping
- Understimulated by environment
- Overstimulated by environment
- Student may be gifted, or experiencing a learning impairment, ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)

Student Behavior:

- The behavior tends to happen over and over again

Attempts to Reduce Stimulation:

- The behavior occurs when there is a lot going on
- The student can do other things while doing the behavior
- The behavior tends to occur in stressful, anxiety producing or highly demanding situations

Attempts to Increase Stimulation:

- The behavior occurs when there is little going on
- The behavior occurs when the student seems bored
- The behavior seems to follow periods of non-activity (e.g., periods of seat work)

Play

Possible Origins of Behavior:

- Society expects children to play: "play is the work of children"
- Student is involved in routine, structured activities for long periods of time
- Lack of opportunities to interact with peers

Student Behavior:

- The behavior would occur when no one else was around
- The student seems to enjoy performing the behavior
- Student is sorry if someone gets hurt
- Student is reluctant to stop the behavior when asked to do so

What Is a Paraeducator's Role Regarding Challenging Student Behavior?

There are many ways paraeducators can support a student with challenging behaviors. The teacher and the student's team will generally plan ways to prevent certain behaviors, to strengthen others, and to respond to misbehaviors. The team will develop an individual student support plan, and generally paraeducators will help in implementing it. Paraeducators also support positive behaviors in many other ways, including:

- observing the student, collecting information, and reporting the student's progress to teachers
- attending to day-to-day academic and social needs of the student
- promoting social relationships of student with other students
- providing instructional and social support to encourage success of the student
- modeling and reinforcing appropriate social skills or replacement behaviors
- following an effective teacher-designed response plan when target behaviors occur

Legal and Ethical Considerations

In supporting students with challenging behaviors, paraeducators should follow the ethical and legal guidelines listed below:

- Always respond to students in a respectful manner.
- Remember, all efforts at external control (such as punishment and even rewards) carry the potential for harm if misused.
- Never engage in behavior that may be perceived as insulting, humiliating, or sarcastic when working with students, even if they have been difficult and you are frustrated or angry.
- Do not implement any type of hurtful, punitive, or aversive behavioral interventions that may cause harm to the student.
- In general, for your safety and that of students, do not attempt passive restraint, de-escalation, or crisis management techniques unless you have been trained and authorized to do so.
- Make sure that any type of intervention used to change behavior is part of a plan developed by a qualified professional and that you have been appropriately trained to conduct it.
- Know what the procedures are for collecting information about a student's behavior and maintaining the confidentiality of that information.
- Know the procedures for reporting harassing, threatening, or potentially harmful behavior.
- If you are asked to carry out a behavior support plan, know what it says and what the student's goals are.
- Know your district's policies on how to respond to misbehavior and what to do if there is a behavioral crisis.
- Make sure lines of communication are open with your supervisor and classroom teachers, and that you are clear about behavioral expectations, school rules, and where to go if you have a question. Do not hesitate to ask for help if you are unsure of anything.

Summary

Although your role in working with students with behavioral challenges can be challenging for you, the tools necessary for the educational team to bring about behavior change and positive behavioral skills do exist and can be used to make the student's experience more constructive and your job more productive.

References

Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities: Final Regulations, 34 C.F.R. § 300.303 (1999).

Ayres, B., & Hedeen, D. (1997). Creating positive behavioral supports: Consider the message behind the behavior. In M.F. Giangreco, (Ed.). *Quick guides to inclusion: Ideas for educating students with disabilities* (p.125). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Carr, E. G., Horner, R. H., Turnbull, A. P., Marquis, J. G., McLaughlin, D., McAtee, M. L., Smith, C. E., Ryan, K., Ruef, M. B., & Doolabh, A. (1999). *Positive behavior support for people with developmental disabilities: A research synthesis.* Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

Hales, D., & Hales, R. (1995). Is something wrong with my child? *Caring for the mind: The comprehensive guide to mental health* (pp. 647-700). New York: Bantam Books.

Hamilton, R., Welkowitz, J., Mandeville, S., Prue, J., & Fox, T. (1995). *Prevention, teaching & responding: A planning team process for supporting students with emotional and behavioral difficulties in regular education.* Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R., & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding and addressing challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families to include students with emotional and behavioral difficulties in regular education* (pp. 50-51). Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Source: Beach Center on Families and Disability (1998). Reprinted with permission.

The Story of Samantha

Samantha, 10, likes to write poetry, use computers, and listen to music. The principal describes her as a model student. Last year no one would have said Samantha was a model student. She scratched, hit, bit, damaged equipment, ran out of classrooms, and pulled her educational assistant's long, blonde hair. Sam's parents lived on the edge, always waiting for "the phone call" from school.

This third grader with autism and moderate speech disabilities who did not "belong," become the fourth-grader genuinely welcomed at school thanks to a strategy known as positive behavioral support.

Traditionally, people did not ask why inappropriate behavior occurred. They just wanted to "fix" a situation. If they had spent time investigating "why," they might have realized the behavior had a purpose. In Samantha's situation, outbursts were her methods to communicate. When she threw an object, it was her request for attention. Pulling hair got her out work that she did not want to do.

Find the reason for the behavior, then teach a more acceptable behavior. That's what a team of people who best knew Sam did. In her situation, like most others, contributing complex factors first had to be understood and were pinpointed in a "functional assessment."

In Samantha's functional assessment, trained special-

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ists from the University of Washington at Seattle talked with people in Samantha's life and directly observed her. When the team had a detailed description of the challenging behavior, members made predictions when the behavior most likely (and least likely) occurred. Then they tested their ideas to see whether their hunches were on target.

Samantha's functional assessment showed that she used her outbursts to avoid difficult tasks, obtain attention, and to express her frustration at not being able to make choices or have some control in her environment. Lack of sleep and changes in routine also set off her outbursts.

Once they knew Sam's triggers and the reasons for her behavior, the support team made changes for her life that gave her day greater predictability, more choices (but not so many that would overwhelm her), fewer instructions, and added relevance to her school work.

Changes happened at home, too. Once, Samantha behaved better, her parents, school staff, and others who cared about Samantha got together and discussed the "ideal" life for Sam. All thought that making friends, spending more time in the regular classroom rather than the resource room, and medications with fewer side effects were part of that ideal life.

Soon Sam was in the school band, Girl Scouts, an arts program, and a church group. This exposure helped Sam's social skills, but she still got frustrated easily when she did not get her way. Sam's parents and school staff taught her to recognize anger through picture cards. They also encouraged Samantha to talk about her feelings and go to a quiet place for relaxation when she got mad.

To help make these new changes stick, Sam's appropriate behaviors were continually rewarded. To make rewards ones that Sam really liked, the team asked those who knew Sam for suggestions and they asked Sam herself. Samantha had very definite ideas about things that she liked! Ice cream ranked at the top, followed closely by "slurpees," a drink from a local store; Barbie doll items; and McDonald's restaurant food. In time, she did not need as many material rewards. But she always received continual praise for her desirable behavior.

Bit by bit, Samantha's new life took form. Yet, the course did not necessarily run smoothly. Since they never knew exactly when Samantha might have an outburst, her support team prepared advance plans to deal with possible relapses.

Samantha's behavior changed relatively quickly. But old habits often resurfaced. Checking weekly (even daily) for progress, such as counting the number of times a behavior does or does not occur, decreases in medicine dosages, writing in a daily log, and other methods, helped keep the plan working. Behavior has truly changed when in the child's everyday environment, each of these is true:

♦ The behavior does not happen in a normal environment.

- When things that once set off the behavior happen, the child uses a more appropriate, positive strategy.

- The child can be in different settings and behave well even if someone is not there to be a guide or assist.

If you would like to know more about Samantha's story, see the videotape "Samantha," available for $30.00 prepaid (price includes shipping and handling) from the Beach Center on Families and Disability, 3111 Haworth, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

Unit 1 Activity Sheets

Understanding Student Behavior

Activity Sheet

Challenging Behavior Descriptions:

(The following descriptions represent ***general categories*** *of behavioral or emotional challenges. They are not representative of specific diagnoses.)*

1. Karl is in third grade. He enjoys school and spends an inordinate amount of time talking about his Pokemon cards. When he talks he seems to jabber and takes over the conversation, jumping from one subject to another. When he does this, the other children quickly move on to someone else. Because he is so impulsive, he often loses track of his cards and leaves them at home or on the bus. He never quite fits in with the other children, and this frustrates and angers him. Karl often gets into trouble for not being able to stand still in line and for turning in messy papers. In math class he is quite bright, but he blurts out the answers without thinking. He gets poor grades because he always loses his homework or leaves it in his cubby.

2. Matthew is in eighth grade and he always comes to school with a scowl on his face. He can be very prickly in his social studies class, especially in his cooperative group because he thinks nothing anyone ever does is good enough. He often teases other students and annoys the teacher when students are supposed to be working. Then when the group doesn't get its work done, he blames everyone else. He has a short trigger and consequently winds up fighting at lunchtime and in the hallways. Teachers avoid confronting him on his negative behavior, because they know he'll explode at them and things will surely escalate out of control. He's spent so much time in the planning room that he's had to drop back one year in his mathematics book. When anyone tries to compliment him, he makes a sarcastic or vulgar remark. When he gets a poor grade, he destroys his paper and slams doors. Everyone stays away from Matthew.

3. Jasmine is in fourth grade. She tries to be perfect in everything she does. When she gets dressed for school in the morning, there is never an outfit that looks just right. She's frequently late to school and arrives in tears because of some problem with her outfit. When she goes to first period reading class, she refuses to read aloud–or if she does, she does it in a whisper. When she writes in her journal, she writes only what the teacher tells her to write. Her letters are perfectly aligned, but she never shares any of her thoughts. Jasmine avoids trying out new things in math class or taking any risks. If she doesn't know the "right" answer she leaves the questions blank, resulting in many lower grades. Sometimes it takes her three hours to complete one spelling assignment because she is afraid to make a mistake. When she's at school, she always sits at the same table, eats the same food, and avoids initiating conversations with anyone other than her one friend, Emily. At home she tends to sleep a great deal, but she always seems tired. This year she stopped playing soccer after school and cries when her parents "force" her to play with other children.

4. John is a tenth grader at a regular high school. He spends most of his time in a community-based instruction program, where he is learning job skills. During this semester he is working at a movie theater in the afternoon. He stocks all of the candy machines and the popcorn concession. Then he vacuums the entire theater. John is noisy at times as he whistles and makes random vocalizations during his work. He continually engages in repetitive motions. He does not acknowledge or say hello to anyone unless he's reminded to do so. He used to sway back and forth whenever standing, but now he uses this to his advantage while vacuuming. In his classes at the school, John uses a communication board to indicate his major needs, because he seldom verbalizes to anyone and does not have the physical control to use sign language. During a basic social studies class he frequently jumps out of his seat, vocalizes, rocks for a few seconds, then returns to his seat. Although he is not able to read on a tenth grade level, he enjoys watching the videos in class and can answer some basic factual questions about countries studied.

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Activity Sheet

Types of Challenging Behaviors Activity Agenda

	Time
1. Within each group, members assign roles (facilitator, recorder, reporter, time keeper).	2 min.
2. Facilitator reads disorder description.	1 min.
3. Group members come to consensus about what type of behavior disorder best describes the student in the description and why. (Participants may refer to readings in the Participant's Manual)	5 min.
4. Group members describe specific behaviors that impact the student in the description, both academically and socially.	8 min.
5. Group members summarize their work, and prepare to share that summary with the whole class (one minute per group).	4 min.

Activity Sheet

Functions of Behavior Role-Play Scripts

Paraeducator's role for all role plays:
You are Ms./Mr. Jones, a paraeducator working with a small group of third graders who are working on multiplication tables. You may have the students working individually with flash cards, you may have the students working in pairs quizzing each other on times tables, or you may be reviewing strategies for how to remember multiplication facts. Your lesson should be roughly the same for all role plays. Remember, this is a role play where a student will "act out," so deal with the behavior in any way that you feel is appropriate; the focus of this activity is not on your skills as a paraeducator, rather on understanding the functions of student behavior.

Role play 1

Target student role: You are a third grader in Ms. Jones's class. It seems that no one ever talks to you on the playground at recess. Sometimes you ask other students to play tetherball with you and they run away. Today there was no room for you to sit at your favorite lunch table and so you had to sit at the end of the boys' table. But, in class, Ms. Jones is always nice. And she knows that you are smart! And she likes it when you answer her questions and talk to her about things you like. And she keeps the other kids from saying mean things to you.

Finally, the time for math class is here. You have so much to tell her and show her!

- When she begins the lesson, you decide to answer all the questions before the other students do (if you answer before they raise their hands she'll surely call on you!).
- You want to show her your new backpack and the new pens that you bought.
- And the kids and Ms. Jones might like to know that you now have your own flashcards at home.
- And maybe they should know that you learned a new song from The Wizard of Oz – it's called "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." And this would be the perfect time to sing it for everyone! (Start singing the song.)

It'll be so great that they know all these neat things about you!

What is the function of this behavior?

Role play 2

Target student role: You are in Ms. Jones's third-grade class. You've just come from lunch, and you're getting hot and tired. She's up there blabbing on and on about your least favorite topic, multiplication tables. Who needs them? They are so stupid and boring! Who would ever use them? And she always gives out these stupid quizzes afterwards and you always get half of them wrong. Then your parents get angry and try to force you to study more, and they take away your computer games, TV, and time with friends. This is not a road you want to go down!

- When Ms. Jones begins to talk, you say, "Oh, NOT more times tables. How many of these stupid things are there?"
- She responds to you, and then you continue to make silly noises and funny faces and roll your eyes every time someone answers a question.
- You can't find your pencil, and so you ask her if you could go to your locker.
- When she scolds you for forgetting things, you suddenly feel that you want a drink.
- You ask to go to the bathroom.
- You yawn.
- You doodle on your math book cover.
- For awhile you put your head down and hum softly to yourself while trying to daydream (anything but those times tables!).
- You ask to go to the bathroom again.

What is the function of these behaviors?

Role play 3 ______________________________

Target student role: You are a student in Ms. Jones's third-grade class. Math class is about to start and she thinks she's going to force you to learn some stupid multiplication tables! Well, you've got to show her and the other students what a waste of time this is! Besides, it's if she wasn't such a bad teacher and school wasn't so ridiculous you would have been in fourth grade. But, oh no–like somehow hearing these things again is going to make you want to learn them!

When Ms. Jones pulls out the chalk and blackboard and starts with those numbers, you do the following:

- Pull out a piece of paper and draw a picture of a woman on it. Only she's fat and has horns!
- When Mrs. Jones is talking to a student, show the picture to other students and get them all to laugh.
- When she calls on you and asks you what you're doing, say "I'm not doing anything!"
- When she confronts you and asks you to stop, you say, "This class is stupid!"
- After her next move you should retreat and be quiet. This time put pencils in your ears to make the class laugh.
- When she asks you (or tells you) to stop, ask her why she's always picking on you and why she's never fair.
- Say, "Other kids do silly things and they don't get into trouble."
- Say, "I'm only trying to make kids laugh. I'm not doing anything *wrong*!"

What is the function of this behavior?

Role play 4

Target student role: You are a third grader in Ms. Jones's class. It's late morning, and you had to get up at 6:00 to leave by 6:30 to catch the bus. There was no time for breakfast, and you feel tired and shaky and your stomach is grumbling. Besides, the chair you sit in is way too small, it's hot in this classroom, and you have been sitting for over five hours (one hour on the bus, and in school since then). The fluorescent lights give you a headache, and you just want to get up and move around and get some air.

You find that when you feel like this, if you just hum to yourself and rock a little in your chair, it takes your mind off the hunger and headache. If you put your head down on the table and tune out the noise, it makes you feel better. You don't know these times tables and you are getting very anxious. You start to rock faster and begin shuffling your feet and leaning way back in your chair. When the teacher moves you away from the group (because of all your commotion) you get even more worked up. When it comes time to write, you can't sit still.

- You hum quietly to yourself.
- You rock back and forth in your chair, then lean your chair back
- You tap your pencil on the desk.
- You put your head down on the table.

What is the function of the behavior?

Role play 5

Target student role: You are a third grader in Ms. Jones's class. It's time for math and you already know your multiplication tables. This can get kind of boring. But you're really good at keeping yourself occupied.

- You take out a piece of paper and begin drawing lots of hearts, flowers and stars in a pretty design. You really get into it, drawing your intricate designs quickly!
- When you're done with drawing (or when Ms. Jones asks you to stop), you begin making a paper airplane. When Ms. Jones turns her back you sail it over to your friend Tommy on the other side of the classroom. Wow! It actually flies!
- Ms. Jones then takes the plane away. With nothing left to play with you begin to daydream. You line up little pencils and pieces of jewelry and stuff on your desk and then pretend they are golf balls and your pencil is the golf club. You try to spin the pencil or pens, or hit the smaller items across the room to see how many points you could get.
- You try to get your friends to compete with you in who could hit items the farthest!

What is the function of the behavior?

Activity Sheet

Identifying Positive Supports Activity Worksheet

Directions: In your group, identify the following based on the Samantha Story in the Participant's Manual. (20 min.)

Name: Samantha

① What are her strengths and interests?

② What are her challenging behaviors?

③ What happens before the behaviors (antecedents)?

④ What happens after the behaviors (consequences)?

⑤ What do the behaviors communicate?

⑥ What prevention strategies could be used?

⑦ What replacement behavior skills could be taught?

⑧ Responses?

Unit 1 Forms

Understanding Student Behavior

- Knowledge Review
- Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary
- Unit Evaluation Form

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Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Site: ____________________

Instructor: ____________________

Directions: Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.

1. Why do behaviors of students become a significant concern in school?
   a) they can interfere with learning
   b) they can interfere with social relationships
   c) they can interfere with safety of the schools
   d) all of the above

2. Which of the following would most likely be considered a characteristic of a student with an attention problem?
   a) being tired and lethargic
   b) having problems organizing work
   c) frequently fidgeting and squirming
   d) demonstrating a hostile attitude
   e) b & c only

3. Externalizing behaviors most likely would include:
   a) unusual thoughts
   b) frequent physical or acting out behavior
   c) passivity
   d) anxiousness and fearfulness
   e) all of the above

4. Students who fear school, who might be withdrawn or who are anxious, may most likely be considered to have which type of disorder?
   a) internalizing
   b) passive aggressive behavior
   c) fear of failure
   d) neurological disorder

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5. Which of the following is **not** true about autism?
   a) it is always associated with aggression
   b) it represents a range of behaviors across a scale of different intensities
   c) it is associated with communication difficulties
   d) it often interferes with social interaction

6. A functional assessment of behavior provides information about
   a) what factors may contribute to a particular behavior
   b) the causes of a behavior problem
   c) whether a behavioral disorder exists
   d) the extent to which the behavior can be changed

7. Which of the following is generally **not** part of a positive behavior support plan?
   a) prevention strategies
   b) teaching alternative behaviors
   c) punishment strategies
   d) response strategies
   e) a functional assessment

8. Behavior communicates many things and always serves a purpose or function. Which of the following are common "functions" of behavior?
   a) to escape something unpleasant
   b) to annoy teachers
   c) to get attention
   d) a and b
   e) a and c only

9. Which of the following is **not** the role of a paraeducator when addressing behavioral needs of students?
   a) modeling appropriate social skills
   b) deciding on appropriate punishments for students who misbehave
   c) observing and collecting information about behavior
   d) providing instructional support to students
   e) promoting social relationships of students

10. Which of the following is an example of teaching a replacement behavior?
   a) teaching a student to get attention by tapping instead of pulling hair
   b) always responding to a misbehavior in a consistent way
   c) moving a student away from an object that distracts him
   d) redirecting a student who has become frustrated and angry

Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to review the individual student support plan (behavior plan) for a student with whom they work who has challenging behaviors (Note: The student who is chosen for this practicum requirement will also be the focus of the practicum requirements for Units 2, 3, and 4.)

b) The paraeducator will review the student support plan to identify the four primary components of the plan: target behaviors, prevention strategies, replacement behaviors, and response strategies. These components will be recorded on the following page.

c) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to identify his/her role in carrying out the components of the student support plan. The paraeducator and cooperating teacher may refer to the paraeducator's role regarding student behavior located in the reading "Understanding Student Behavior" by Backus in the Participant's Manual to help identify ways that the paraeducator may support positive behaviors.

d) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will identify and outline one role (identified above) that the paraeducator will focus on (e.g., to learn more about, to target for change, to define more clearly) for carrying out the student support plan. The paraeducator will record the role on the following page. The cooperating teacher will mark a check in the box above to indicate that the paraeducator has completed this practicum requirement.

Student Support Plan

Target Behaviors:

Prevention Strategies:

Replacement Behaviors:

Response Strategies:

Paraeducator's Role for Carrying Out Components of the Student Support Plan:

Unit 1 Evaluation Form
Understanding Student Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Participant name (optional): ______________________ Date: ________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   - ☐ very important
   - ☐ important
   - ☐ somewhat important
   - ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

4. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

5. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

6. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

7. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

8. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

9. What was the most important or useful thing that you learned from this unit?

10. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Unit 2:

Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Participant's Overview

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Brief Description of Unit

This unit provides information about the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior. Paraeducators will be able to describe and record behaviors in observable terms and will learn a variety of ways to record useful information. This information will help educators determine the factors that contribute to challenging behaviors.

Hours of Instruction (In class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.

1. Paraeducators will understand the importance of gathering information about challenging behavior and describing it in observable terms. (K)
2. Paraeducators will recognize various factors that occur prior to, during, or following challenging behaviors. (K)
3. Paraeducators will learn various ways to gather and record information about challenging behavior. (K)
4. Paraeducators will demonstrate observing challenging behavior, describing it in observable terms, and gathering useful information to share with the team. (S)

Preparing For the Unit

Required Readings:

Beach Center on Families and Disability (1998). *Functional assessment of behavior.* University of Kansas, Lawrence: Author.

Foster-Johnson, L., & Dunlap, G. (1993). Using functional assessment to develop effective, individualized interventions for challenging behaviors. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 25* (3), 44-48.

Janney, R., & Snell, M.E. (2000). Individualized behavioral support plans: Problem identification and functional assessment. In R. Janney & M.E. Snell, *Teachers' guides to inclusive practices: Behavioral support* (pp. 13-36). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Participant Preparation for Unit 2:

- Read the required readings **prior to the class.**
- Based on the required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class.
- Bring writing materials for note taking and activities to class.
- Review practicum requirements for Unit 2.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed can be found at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher and approval by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Alberto, P.A., & Troutman, A. (1999). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers.* Columbus: Prentice-Hall.

Demchak, M.A., & Bossert, K.W. (1996). Assessing problem behaviors. In *Innovations: Research to Practice Series.* Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

Hamilton, R., Welkowitz, J., DeOliva, S., Prue, J., & Fox, T. (1994). *Prevention, teaching, and responding: A planning team process for supporting students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education.* Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Horner, R., & Carr, E.G. (1997). Behavioral support for students with severe disabilities: Functional assessment and comprehensive intervention. *Journal of Special Education, 31* (1), 84-104.

O'Neill, R., Horner, R., Albin, R., Storey, K., & Sprague, J. (1990). *Functional analysis of problem behavior: A practical assessment guide*. Sycamore, IL: Sycamore.

Web Site:

Council on Exceptional Children:
http://www.cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

Unit 2 Required Readings

Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

The following readings provide information about the underlying reasons for collecting information about challenging behavior. Examples of effective ways to collect information are provided. The data is used to help teachers and special educators develop prevention strategies, replacement behaviors, and response strategies. Although these articles are written for teachers, much of their content is useful for paraeducators, as they observe and report on behavior. To begin, a brief reading from the Beach Center on Families and Disability (1998) provides an overview of the concept of "functional assessment."

The article by Foster-Johnson and Dunlap (1993) provides a rationale for engaging in data-gathering activities and discusses assumptions about behavior. Classroom factors that might affect behavior are used to guide planning by the team. This article is intended to be a resource for the paraeducator who may be asked to implement strategies planned by the team.

The next reading, by Janney and Snell (2000) focuses on ways to collect information about events that take place before challenging behaviors and may influence their occurrence. This reading provides more examples of ways to collect data, especially ways to document the intensity of behaviors. It also discusses ways to collect information about a student's history and quality of life (these are more likely to be collected by a teacher or psychologist however) and explains how this information contributes to developing hunches about why a behavior occurs.

Functional Assessment of Behavior

The functional assessment is a foundation of behavioral support. The results of a functional assessment let caregivers design an environment that "works" for people with communication and behavioral challenges. The person with the challenges and those who best know the person collaborate with someone trained in behavioral analysis. Together, they plan how to reduce or eliminate challenging behavior.

Functional assessment methods look at the behavioral support needs of people who exhibit the full range of challenging behaviors, such as self-injury, hitting and biting, violent and aggressive attacks, property destruction, and disruptive behaviors (e.g., screaming or tantrums).

Those who exhibit challenging behaviors may be labeled as having a developmental disability, autism, mentally retardation, mental illness, emotional or behavioral disorder, traumatic brain injury or may carry no formal diagnostic labels at all. These individuals vary greatly in their overall support needs and ability to communicate and participate in their own behavioral support.

Information about when, where, and why challenging behavior occurs builds effective, efficient behavioral support, because unplanned strategies can make behaviors worse. Also functional assessments are mandated by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act for use by Individualized Education Plan (IEP) teams addressing behavioral concerns. Many states, too, have laws or regulations stipulating the need for a functional assessment before permitting significant behavioral interventions. The observations may find out that behavior strategies aren't necessary. Instead, the behaviors may have a medical cause. Allergies, infections, menstrual cycle effects, toothaches, chronic constipation and other medical conditions may bring on challenging behaviors. Medication also can influence behavior.

A functional assessment:

- Clearly describes the challenging behaviors, including behaviors that occur together
- Identifies the events, times, and situations that predict when the challenging behaviors *will* and *will not* occur across the range of daily routines
- Identifies the consequences that maintain the challenging behaviors (what the person "gets out" of the behaviors, e.g., attention, escape, preferred items)
- Develops one or more summary statements or hypotheses that describe specific behaviors, specific types of situations in which they occur, and the reinforcers that maintain the behaviors in that situation
- Collects directly observed data that support these summary statements

A functional assessment can be done in many ways and at different precision levels depending on the behavior severity. A person who has observed undesirable behavior in different situations and concluded that "she does that because. . ." or "he does that in order to. . ." has also developed a summary statement about things that influence behavior.

A complete assessment allows confident prediction of the conditions in which the challenging behavior is likely to occur or not occur and when there is agreement about the consequences that perpetuate the challenging behavior.

Functional assessment methods fall into three general strategies:

Information gathering (interviews and rating scales). This method involves talking to the individual and to those who know the individual best. It also consists of formal interviews, questionnaires, and rating scales to identify which events in an environment are linked to the specific problem behavior. Questions to answer include: What challenging behaviors cause concern? What events or physical conditions occur before the behavior that increase the behavior's predictability? What result appears to motivate or maintain the challenging behavior? What appropriate behaviors could produce the same result? What can be learned from previous behavioral support efforts about strategies that are ineffective, partially effective, or effective for only a short time?

Direct observation. Teachers, direct support staff, and/or family members who already work or live with the person observe the person having challenging behaviors in natural conditions over an extended period. The observations must not interfere with normal daily environments. In most cases, observers record when a problem behavior occurs, what happened just before the behavior, what happened after, and their perception as to the function of the behavior. When an observer collects 10-15 instances of the behavior, he or she might discover where a pattern exists.

Functional analysis manipulations. Taking the assessment one step further is the functional analysis. In this process, a behavior analyst systematically changes potential controlling factors (consequences, structural variables, i.e., task difficulty or length) to observe effects on a person's behavior.

These determinations involve creating situations that will reduce, eliminate, or provoke the challenging behavior to test whether the hypothesis is correct. Functional analysis—expensive in time and energy—may be the only way, in some cases, to ensure an adequate assessment. It is the only approach that clearly demonstrates relations between environmental events and challenging behaviors. To support the functional assessment, also consider measuring activity patterns (the variety and degree of community integration and relationships).

Behavioral support must be conducted with the dignity of the person as a primary concern.

The objective of functional assessment is not just to define and eliminate undesirable behavior but also to understand the structure and function of behavior to teach and promote effective alternatives.

Functional assessment is a process for looking at relationships between behavior and the environment. It is not simply a review of the person with challenging behaviors.

For more information on positive behavioral support, call the Family Connection at 1-800-854-4938 and ask for our free fact sheets, a listing of related articles, or answers to questions.

This is a product of The Family Connection located at the University of Kansas. The Beach Center (3111 Haworth, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045, 785-864-7600) takes the researchers' work and gets it to families in as many ways as possible.

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Adapted with permission from O'Neill, R. E., Horner, R. H., Albin, R. W., Sprague, J. R., Storey, K., & Newton, N. S. (1997). *Functional assessment and program development for problem behavior: A practical handbook.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

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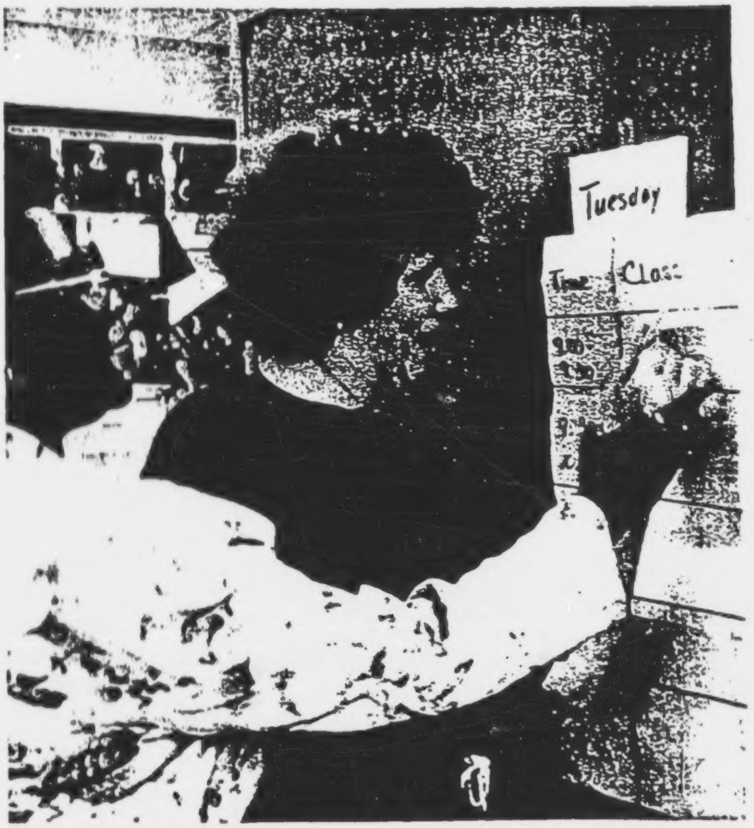
Using Functional Assessment to Develop Effective, Individualized Interventions for Challenging Behaviors

Lynn Foster-Johnson • Glen Dunlap



The teacher designed a schedule intervention for the student's challenging behavior so that the events that lead to the behavior no longer occur.

One of the most serious issues facing teachers in special education is the presence of challenging behaviors such as aggression, swearing, defiance, self-stimulation, and other inappropriate or disruptive acts. When students display problem behaviors that defy typical programs of classroom behavior management, it is important to gain an improved understanding of the behaviors in order to develop positive and effective interventions. This article provides a description and overview of a process called *functional assessment* that educators can use to establish a basis for individualized behavior management programming. In this process, the teacher gathers information about the student's behavior and the classroom environment and then forms hypothesis statements about the purpose of the behavior and the way the behavior is associated with other events in the environment. These statements should lead to logical changes in the student's intervention program, and, if the information is valid, the changes should result in improved behavior. The remaining three articles in this Special Focus section describe cases in which educators have used functional assessment to provide improved support for students in public school classrooms.

Rationale

"It's time for vocational activities," Ms. McClean said. As she came to Jerry's desk, she noticed that he was listening to music. "Jerry," she said, "What do you need to do?" Jerry looked at her and started squealing and hitting his face. "Jerry," she said, "Do you want to lose points?" Jerry picked up his point card, gave it to Ms. McClean, went back to his chair, and sat down, screaming and hitting his face.

"Tina," Mr. Carey said, "you need to start doing your work." Tina picked up her pencil and started her math problems. One minute later, Mr. Carey noticed that she had stopped working on her problems and was scribbling on the entire page, tearing the paper into little pieces. "Tina," he reminded, "you want to earn all your points; remember what you're working for." Tina smiled and crumpled up her paper. As she got out a new piece of paper, Mr. Carey said, "That's great Tina, let's get to work." However, when Mr. Carey looked up 3 minutes later, Tina was scribbling and crumpling the new piece of paper.

Do these scenarios sound familiar? Students with special needs may have complicated and challenging behaviors that restrict their opportunities to benefit from educational experiences. The intense behaviors that students like Jerry exhibit reduce their quality of life and limit their opportunities to participate in the community. Milder behaviors like Tina's are also problematic, because learning and movement back into typical educational settings are delayed.

Sometimes students with challenging behaviors do not respond to classoom behavior management plans or ypical reinforcement strategies. For xample, Jerry repeatedly hits himself when presented with an activity that he does not like. A common response from he teacher might be to use the classoom behavior management system to orrect this inappropriate behavior. erry might be fined points or be asked o practice following directions without hitting himself. If these strategies do not educe or eliminate the behavior, the eacher might develop a new management plan designed specifically for Jerry and his self-injurious behavior. For this example, the new behavior management plan might require Jerry to sit in a corner for 5 minutes every time he displays the behavior. This plan works for about a week. However, after a week of good behavior, the self-injury reappears. A sit-out no longer prevents Jerry from self-injurious behavior and he is hitting himself even harder than before. Once again, the teacher feels the need to develop a new behavior management plan, probably more restrictive than the sit-out procedure.

This example is typical of many teachers' experiences in developing behavior management strategies. Often, classroom strategies have been based on the use of consequences—using rewards such as edibles and stickers to increase desirable behavior and unpleasant circumstances such as time-out and point fines to reduce undesirable behavior. These strategies have been shown to improve the behavior of many students, but sometimes they are insufficient. When standard procedures do not work adequately, the reason is frequently that the procedures do not address the function of the problem behavior or the particular way in which the behavior is associated with the student's environment.

The Context and Functions of Behavior

In recent years, researchers and educators have described strategies for understanding relationships between challenging behaviors and the student's environment (Carr, Robinson, & Palumbo, 1990; Lennox & Miltenberger, 1989; O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Storey, & Sprague, 1990). These strategies represent an assessment process that results in statements about the purpose, or function, of the behavior and the way in which the behavior is associated with environmental events. The important thing about these statements (sometimes called *hypotheses*) is that they can be translated into logical, positive, and effective intervention strategies. Because the process is dependent upon some strong assumptions about challenging behavior, it is important that these assumptions be reviewed.

Assumption 1: Challenging behavior is related to the context in which it occurs. A well-accepted assumption is that challenging behaviors, as well as desirable behaviors, are governed by the consequences that follow; that is, behaviors will increase if they are rewarded and decrease if they are punished. It is also the case that behaviors are influenced greatly by the circumstances in which they occur; however, this observation is not considered as frequently when behavior management programs are developed. This assumption states simply that challenging behaviors do not occur in a vacuum and that they typically occur in response to some stimulus or situation that can be identified. The implication is that changes in the circumstances that are associated with challenging behavior can be an important ingredient in individualized programs of behavior management.

Context refers to all of the events and sensations that might affect a student at any given point in time. Context includes environmental events, such as specific instructions or peer interactions, that occur immediately before the challenging behavior. It also includes the general conditions to which a student may be exposed, such as assigned activities, curricular expectations, and seating arrangements. Another important part of context has to do with the student's physiological and emotional condition. Anxiety, hunger, anger, fatigue, illness, and pain all produce sensations that can have a significant impact on the occurrence of undesirable behaviors.

Understanding the context in which challenging behaviors are likely, and unlikely, to occur is an important part of the functional assessment process. As the case studies that follow this article demonstrate, context can be viewed as consisting of events that are immediately antecedent to the challenging behavior (e.g., a particular kind of activity or the entrance of a particular classmate), as well as events that might have occurred earlier in time (e.g., going without sleep or having a fight on the school bus). These latter circumstances, which are sometimes called *setting events* (Wahler & Fox, 1981), can increase the likelihood that otherwise innocent antecedent stimuli will trigger challenging behaviors.

Assumption 2: Challenging behavior serves a function for the student. This second major assumption is that challenging behaviors have a purpose or function that, from the student's perspective, makes them a reasonable and logical way to act. This does not mean that the student is able to articulate the reason for the behavior; very often the student may be unable to do so. What it does mean is that the behavior either works currently or has worked in the past to achieve a result that is agreeable in some way for the student. Identifying this particular function of a challenging behavior is an important step in functional assessment.

The possible functions of challenging behaviors can be roughly categorized as "to get something" or "to escape or avoid something." The first category includes those behaviors that have the function of obtaining attention from the teacher or approval from the student's classmates. This category may include any type of challenging behavior that allows the student to gain attention. Some typical behaviors include crying, aggression, noncompliance, scribbling on class work, refusing to do class work, inappropriate verbalizations such as swearing or babbling, and behaviors that serve to provide the student with sensory stimulation (body rocking, finger flipping, hair twirling). When these behaviors are exhibited in the classroom, the teacher often interacts with the student by telling him or her to stop exhibiting the behavior or offering reminders of the consequences of the behavior, thereby giving the student attention. The student's peers may provide a powerful incentive for the student to exhibit difficult behaviors. With some students, peer status and attention are major reinforcers. Challenging behaviors may also allow the student to get tangible rewards such as food, toys, or other items. This is evident when students exhibit problem behaviors and are given preferred toys or objects to "calm them down."

Other behaviors may be displayed in order to escape or avoid circumstances that are disliked by the student. Throwing tantrums, exhibiting aggression, whining, and "goofing off" in instructional sessions often serve the function of escaping unpleasant or difficult schoolwork. When a behavior serves, at least some of the time, to terminate or postpone events in the environment, then escape may be suspected as its function.

It is important to recognize that the function of a behavior is not necessarily related to its form. Tantrums may be an attempt to get something (e.g., attention) or to escape something (e.g., a disliked assignment). The same can be said for other challenging behaviors ranging from incessant doodling to serious self-injury. It is not possible to determine the function of a student's challenging behavior simply by describing the behavior. It is necessary to understand the context and the consequences that surround the behavior, and sometimes it is even helpful to have knowledge of the student's learning history.

When we accept the assumption that a student's challenging behavior has a function, then we may also interpret the challenging behavior as the result of a skill deficit. This means that the student might display the problem behavior because he or she has not learned to achieve the same function through a more appropriate behavior. Often it is easier and more effective for the student to engage in the problem behavior than to learn the appropriate skill. Students with severe disabilities, for example, may engage in challenging behaviors because they have no other effective means to communicate their desires or needs. This observation has crucial implications for behavior management: A central part of these students' behavior management plans must be to teach functional communication (Durand, 1991). This may also be evident in students who have milder disabilities. Sometimes students will display inappropriate verbal responses to feedback or directions from the teacher on classroom assignments because they do not have the social skills they need to respond to feedback in a socially appropriate manner.

These two assumptions—that behavior is related to the context in which it occurs and that behavior is functional—are fundamental to the process of functional assessment and effective, individualized intervention. In the remainder of this article, we will describe the steps involved in conducting a functional assessment and using the information to develop individualized, hypothesis-driven interventions for challenging behaviors.

Definition of Functional Assessment

A functional assessment is a process whereby informed hypothesis statements are developed about relationships between events in the environment and the occurrence of a student's challenging behavior. The results of this process are then used to develop a behavior management plan that will reduce the problem behavior. The components of such a plan are listed in Figure 1.

A functional assessment examines the circumstances surrounding the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the challenging behavior, seeking to identify variables and events that are consistently present in those situations. The student's behavior during these situations is also examined to determine the function of the challenging behavior and to identify which variables might be maintaining the behavior. Once the events that may be contributing to or causing the behavior are discovered and the function of the behavior is ascertained, the teacher forms hypothesis statements about the effects that these variables have on the student's behavior and the function that the behavior serves. The teacher designs an intervention for the behavior that is based on the hypothesis statement. Such an intervention might be teaching the student an alternative, replacement behavior and/or modifying the events that are associated with the consistent occurrence of challenging behavior so that the events that lead to the behavior no longer occur.

Figure 1: Components of a Behavior Management Plan

Conduct a Functional Assessment

1. Collect Information
   - Identify and define the target behavior.
   - Identify events/circumstances associated with the problem behavior.
   - Determine potential function(s) of the problem behavior.
2. Develop Hypothesis Statements About the Behavior
   - Events/circumstances associated with the problem behavior.
   - Function/purpose of the behavior.

⬇

Develop an Intervention (Based on hypothesis statements)

1. Teach alternative behavior.
2. Modify events/circumstances associated with the problem behavior.

The Assessment Process

Collecting Information About the Behavior

The heart of a functional assessment is the collection of information about the variables and events that surround the occurrence of challenging behavior. Contextual information about the behavior, when it does and does not occur, and which variables are associated with each of those situations is essential to this procedure. The steps in collecting this information are as follows.

Step 1: Identify and define the target behavior. The first step in performing a functional assessment is to identify and define the target behavior. This is crucial to the success of the procedure because it gives a standard description of the behavior, ensuring that the information collected is reliable across respondents and settings. The behavioral definition must be observable and descriptive of the topography or appearance of the behavior. For example, Jerry's head hitting could be defined as "Any time that contact is made between Jerry's open hand (palm) and any part of his head or face." This definition should be written and described in all interviews when collecting the information.

Step 2: Identify events and circumstances that are regularly associated with the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the challenging behavior. This is a key step in the process of functional assessment. Its purpose is to identify the details and pertinent variables in the contexts in which challenging behaviors are likely to occur. In those situations in which the behavior is distinct and predictable, this step can be straightforward, while in some other situations it may require a bit of detective work. The step may be seen as obtaining detailed answers to the following two questions:

- What are the specific circumstances that are associated with a likelihood that the challenging behavior will occur?
- What are the specific circumstances that are associated with a high probability that the challenging behavior will *not* occur?

The student employs a strategy to manage his frustration more appropriately.

Following is a list of some of the variables that have been found to influence challenging behaviors and that might be considered for individual students. This list includes potential setting events and antecedent events, but is by no means exhaustive. It is offered simply to suggest some possibilities.

1. *Physiological Factors*
   - Sickness/allergies.
   - Side effects of medication.
   - Fatigue.
   - Hunger or thirst.
   - Increased arousal due to a fight, missing the bus, a disruptive routine.
2. *Classroom Environment*
   - High noise level.
   - Uncomfortable temperature.
   - Over- or understimulation.
   - Poor seating arrangement.
   - Frequent disruptions.
3. *Curriculum and Instruction*
   - Few opportunities for making choices.
   - Lack of predictability in the schedule.
   - Inadequate level of assistance provided to the student.
   - Unclear directions provided for activity completion.
   - Few opportunities for the student to communicate.
   - Activities that are too difficult.
   - Activities that take a long time to complete.
   - Activities that the student dislikes.
   - Activities for which the completion criterion is unclear.
   - Activities that might not be perceived as being relevant or useful by the student.

The influence of setting events, including physiological conditions and events that occur prior to the school day, is especially important to consider when a student's behavior fluctuates from day to day. When some days are associated with desirable behavior and other days that include the same kinds of activities are associated with challenging behaviors, then a significant reason for the problems may be found by examining events occurring outside of the classroom. In their case study that appears later in this Special Focus section, Dadson and Horner describe an example of setting event influences.

It is more common, however, to associate challenging behaviors with events and circumstances that can be identified in the immediate classroom setting. Characteristics of task assignments, including levels of difficulty and preference, are frequently associated with challenging behavior. In addition, the manner in which instructions are delivered, presence and interactions of specific classmates, degree of teacher proximity and attention, presence of extraneous stimuli, and physical characteristics of the immediate setting may all be factors. For some students, the relevance of curricular content and the student's ability to control or predict the sequence of activities may also be influential. All of these variables can be considered in the process of identifying contextual circumstances that are associated with challenging behavior.

Although in some cases teachers may be able to determine associations without it, it is usually desirable to obtain additional data. This can be accomplished through discussions, intersions and interviews are conducted with family members, aides, and others who have opportunities to observe the student in various activities and environments. These interviews should address the two questions presented earlier and should include as many follow-up questions as are needed to identify specific contextual events. Direct observations are often in the form of "A-B-C" recordings (Bijou, Peterson, & Ault, 1968) in which each occurrence of the challenging behavior (B) is noted, with descriptions of the specific events and circumstances that were antecedent (A) to the behavior and those that were consequences (C) for the behavior. A scatter plot (Touchette, MacDonald, & Langer, 1985) is another technique of data collection that provides a pattern analysis for determining which situations are associated with the problems. This technique is illustrated in Figure 2. The example shows that Jerry's head

tional activities and somewhat around domestic activities. Jerry also seemed to have a problem on Days 4 and 9, when his head hitting occurred throughout the day. This fairly simple method of data collection prompted Jerry's support team to investigate more specifically what was occurring during those time periods and on Days 4 and 9.

Step 3: Determine the potential function(s) of the behavior. The information-gathering phase of the functional assessment should not only seek to identify antecedent correlates of the challenging behavior, it should also attempt to identify the function of the behavior. This generally involves examining the consequences that follow the behavior. The interviews, discussions, and direct observations should provide this information.

It is helpful to remember that behavior may serve one of two general func-

Figure 2: Scatter Plot of Jerry's Head Hitting

Student: Jerry Mitchell
Date: Week of 3/11/91 to 3/22/91
Behavior: Head hitting: Any occurrence in which contact is made between Jerry's open hand (palm) and any part of his head or face.
Respondent: Ms. McClean

■ =more than 3 hits ■ =less than 3 hits

Activity	*Time (optional)*	*Day 1 3/11/91*	*Day 2 3/12/91*	*Day 3 3/13/91*	*Day 4 3/14/91*	*Day 5 3/15/91*	*Day 6 3/18/91*	*Day 7 3/19/91*	*Day 8 3/20/91*	*Day 9 3/21/91*	*Day 10 3/22/91*
Breakfast	8:30–9:00										
Personal hygiene	9:00–9:15									■	
Schedule/assignments	9:15–9:30				■					■	
Community-based instruction	9:30–10:45										
PE/Music	10:45–11:15									■	
Domestic	11:15–12:00		■		■		■				
Lunch	12:00–12:30				■						
Personal hygiene	12:30–12:45									■	
Vocational activities	12:45–1:30	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Leisure	1:30–2:00				■						
Prepare for home	2:00–2:15				■					■	
Bus	2:20									■	

something. The goal here is to determine which purpose is maintaining the behavior and what the target is. If the function is to get something, information should be collected on what that target something is. Is it attention from the teacher? Attention from peers? Sensory stimulation? Similarly, if the function is escape, then the information should focus on what circumstances are provoking the escape. Is it a particular activity? Is it just at certain times? Is it only in the presence of a specific adult or peer? The information that is collected on the context in which the behavior occurs should provide this information.

As mentioned previously, Jerry's face hitting seemed to serve an escape function. This was determined by looking at A-B-C records and finding that 90% of the occurrences of face hitting were followed by Jerry's being placed in sit-out. After sit-out he was allowed to get control of himself by listening to music. It was reasonable to suggest that the face hitting worked as a way for Jerry to escape his immediate circumstances (e.g., the vocational activities), because the activities were ended when sit-out began. For Jerry, sit-out may have been preferable to the assigned activities.

Developing Hypothesis Statements

The next major step in the functional assessment process is to examine the information collected in the gathering stage and develop hypothesis statements that describe the relationship between the behavior and the events and circumstances in the environment. These statements are informed guesses about the manner in which the challenging behavior interacts with the environment. The statements should be specific, based on clear observations, and phrased in such a manner that the environment can be manipulated to create changes in the behavior. Statements such as "Sheila has inappropriate verbal interactions with the teacher because she has an emotional disability" are not at all helpful. In contrast, "Sheila has inappropriate verbal interactions with the teacher because she lacks the social skills to respond to the teacher's feedback about an activity" is useful. The latter statement would be even more useful if it were accompanied by a statement such as "Sheila never displays challenging behavior with the teacher, including inappropriate verbal interactions, when she is given an activity that she knows how to do."

In Jerry's case, the interviews and data produced information that led to the following statement: "The vocational activity is too difficult for Jerry to work on for long periods of time, and therefore he hits himself in order to escape the task." Additional information about Jerry's behaviors led to this statement: "Jerry never hits himself during community-based instruction because the activities are easy to complete and fairly short."

When statements have been developed, it is sometimes desirable to verify their accuracy before implementing a new program of behavior management. This can be done by presenting and withdrawing variables in a controlled manner while observing the occurrence of challenging behavior. For example, in Jerry's case, the vocational activity could be shortened or he could be provided with an easier task or additional assistance. These options could be introduced and alternated with days when the previous routine was conducted. If Jerry's behavior improved markedly with the shorter and/or easier activities, then his teacher would gain confidence in the accuracy of her statements. If no difference in Jerry's face hitting were observed, then his teacher would reconsider her observations in order to develop revised hypothesis statements.

Table 1: Sample Hypothesis Statements and Possible Interventions

	Intervention	
Hypothesis Statements	*Modify Antecedents*	*Teach Alternative Behavior*
Suzy starts pinching herself and others around 11:00 a.m. every day because she gets hungry.	*Make sure Suzy gets breakfast.* *Provide a snack at about 9:30 a.m.*	*Teach Suzy to ask for something to eat.*
Jack gets into arguments with the teacher every day during reading class when she asks him to correct his mistakes on the daily reading worksheet.	*Get Jack to correct his own paper.* *Give Jack an easier assignment.*	*Teach Jack strategies to manage his frustration in a more appropriate manner.* *Teach Jack to ask for teacher assistance with the incorrect problems.*
Tara starts pouting and refuses to work when she has to sort a box of washers because she doesn't want to do the activity.	*Give Tara half of the box of washers to sort.* *Give Tara clear directions about how much she has to do or how long she must work.*	*Teach Tara to ask for a break from the activity.*
Frank kicks other children in morning circle time and usually gets to sit right by the teacher.	*Give each child a clearly designated section of the floor that is his or hers.*	*Teach Frank how to ask the children to move over.* *Teach Frank how to ask the teacher to intervene with his classmates.*
Harry is off task for most of math class when he is supposed to be adding two-digit numbers.	*Ask Harry to add the prices of actual food items.* *Intersperse an easy activity with the more difficult math addition so Harry can experience some success.*	*Teach Harry how to ask for help.* *Teach Harry how to monitor his rate of problem completion, and provide reinforcement for a certain number of problems.*

Developing an Effective Intervention

Clear hypothesis statements should lead logically to interventions that are based on an understanding of the particular characteristics of the student's behavior. As such, these interventions should be effective and positive. The range of possible interventions is even more extensive than the number of possible hypotheses. However, hypothesis-based interventions frequently follow one or both of the following guidelines:

1. Modify the context so that events that are associated with challenging behaviors are removed or changed. If the behavior is really a concern, increase those events that are associated with desirable behaviors until the behavior is reduced.
2. Teach desirable alternative behaviors that will achieve the same function as the challenging behaviors. At the same time, make sure that the functional outcomes for the challenging behaviors are no longer occurring.

Modifying the contexts that are associated with challenging behaviors is a relatively easy strategy that produces rapid results if the correct variables have been identified. Depending on the hypotheses, it can mean changing components of the student's curriculum;

altering the level of task difficulty by giving different assignments or additional assistance; changing seating arrangements; providing additional or clearer instructions; altering the density of attention or praise; changing the duration of certain activities; or changing schedules of staff supervision. Increasing the events that are associated with desirable behaviors should effectively reduce the problem behaviors. If it is absolutely necessary to teach the skill in the context that seems to provoke problem behaviors, the teacher should reintroduce that context by interspersing or alternating it with the modified events. When setting events and/or physiological variables are implicated, the problem should be addressed through work with the family and, if appropriate, medical professionals. If setting events cannot be addressed satisfactorily through nonschool interventions, then there are still arrangements that can be implemented, as illustrated by Dadson and Horner.

Learning to use a desirable replacement behavior allows the student to achieve the outcome produced by the challenging behavior in an appropriate manner. Although this can be the more difficult of the two strategies, an alternative, appropriate behavior will increase the student's skill repertoire and generalize to other settings. As the new behavior is taught, the outcomes for the challenging behavior should be removed. This will increase the chances that the student will exhibit the appropriate behavior to gain the desired outcome. In their case study in this Special Focus section, Redmond, Bennett, Wiggert, and McLean demonstrate a strategy for teaching a student with autism a socially acceptable method for gaining and maintaining adult attention.

Returning to Jerry's situation, one hypothesis was that he hit himself to escape from the activity. A desirable alternative for face hitting would be to use functional communication to request a break. If he did not have the necessary communication skills, he could be taught to sign "Break" or give a card to the teacher that said "Break" on it. As long as this request form was encouraged and honored, it should replace the face hitting. At the same time, Jerry's teacher would see that face hitting would no longer be followed by escape from the activity.

Often, it is best to develop an intervention that incorporates both of the guidelines. Changing the context produces a relatively rapid decline in the challenging behavior and frequently serves to increase the individualization of the student's instructional program. This strategy can prevent challenging behaviors by removing the provocation. Because such modifications are not always possible and because instruction in alternative behaviors is so important, it is usually desirable to implement teaching programs as well. Several books and articles are now available that offer detailed suggestions for teaching functional skills in a manner that has been shown to reduce and eliminate behavioral challenges (e.g., Durand, 1991; Evans & Meyer, 1985).

Table 1 provides some sample hypotheses and interventions that illustrate the use of multiple interventions based on the process of functional assessment. The choice of intervention for any particular student depends on the individual needs of that student and the classroom environment.

Conclusion

Although the process of functional assessment is more detailed and systematic than traditional behavior management plan development, it is crucial to the development of an effective, individualized management plan. If implemented correctly, a functional assessment will result in behavior management strategies that are effective, individualized, and appropriate for students with disabilities.

The following three articles demonstrate ways that hypothesis-based interventions can be developed for students who display different challenges in different circumstances. The first article, by Redmond, Bennett, Wiggert, and McLean, illustrates the use of functional assessment to isolate an antecedent condition influencing clothes shredding by a student with autism. In this case, the antecedent condition was the amount of attention from the staff. The second article, by Dadson and Horner, demonstrates an assessment of setting events that occurred before school (i.e., sleeplessness and bus problems) and the kinds of interventions that can result. The third article, by Cooper, Peck, Wacker, and Millard, shows the power of preference for curricular activities in the case of a student with mild disabilities. These case studies are meant to illustrate and elaborate on the process and methods discussed in this article.

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Chapter

Individualized Behavioral Support Plans

Problem Identification and Functional Assessment

Chapters 2 and 3 describe the six steps of a process that educational teams can use to develop positive behavioral supports plans for individual students. This process can be applied effectively for all types of students in all types of environments; however, specific examples in this booklet that illustrate the process involve students with individualized education programs (IEPs) who exhibit serious behavior problems and who are based in inclusive, general education classes. Figure 2.1 lists the six steps of the process to develop positive behavioral supports and outlines forms and worksheets (provided in Appendix A) to be used during this process. It should be recognized that this process requires a significant investment of time and energy that the authors would not expect someone to make without a genuine commitment to finding ways to support students with exceptional learning and behavioral needs within their local schools and communities. Many teachers, however, find that as they gain skill and experience in using this process, the steps become almost intuitive, and the time and paperwork involved gradually decrease.

Steps and Tools to Develop Positive Behavioral Supports

Student Melanie **Date initiated** 9/1/97

Step 1: Define the Problem and Make Decisions About Priorities
- ☐ Step 1 Worksheet: Define the Problem and Make Decisions About Priorities

Step 2: Gather Information
- ☐ Step 2A Worksheet: Student History and Quality-of-Life Profile
- ☐ Step 2B: Information About Specific Target Behavior(s) (check tools that you will use)
    - ☐ Student Schedule Analysis
    - ☐ Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form
    - ☐ A-B-C Observation Form
    - ☐ Incident Record

Step 3: Develop an Hypothesis
- ☐ Step 3 Worksheet: Develop an Hypothesis

Step 4: Design a Plan for Positive Behavioral Support
- ☐ Step 4 Worksheet: Design a Plan for Positive Behavioral Support

Step 5: Use the Plan
- ☐ Step 5: Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Step 6: Evaluate the Plan (check tools that you will use)
- ☐ Step 6 Worksheet: Evaluate the plan
- ☐ Student History and Quality-of-Life Profile
- ☐ Student Schedule Analysis
- ☐ Incident Record
- ☐ Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form
- ☐ Interval Recording of Use of Alternative Skills

Figure 2.1. Steps and tools to develop positive behavioral supports.

Program-at-a-Glance

Student *Melanie*

Date *1997–1998*

IEP objectives

Social/communication
- Use devices/systems to express needs and feelings, to ask questions, to make choices, to answer yes/no, and to communicate greetings
- Relate recent events in two- to three-word sentences

Functional skills
- Follow task directions from cues
- School arrival, departure, and lunch routines
- School/classroom jobs

Math
- Identify numerals 0–1,000
- Number line for less than, more than
- Time to minute (analog, digital)

Language arts
- Comprehension questions, novels
- Computer journal writing
- Read/write/spell functional words

Content areas
- Key words/concepts for each unit

Academic/social management needs
- Peer planning at beginning of year and as needed
- Reduced information per page
- Checklists and graphic organizers for time limits and beginnings/endings

IEP accommodations
- Receive special education assistance/instruction with academics, daily routines, transitions, support for communication techniques, and peer interactions
- Weekly curricular adaptations by special education and general education teachers
- Designated location in school for breaks
- Home/school communication log
- Educational team familiar with and uses all augmentative communication methods

Comments/special needs
- Anecdotal records for IEP progress
- Core team meetings held weekly; entire team meetings held monthly
- Share autism information with all team members/relevant staff

Figure 2.2. Program-at-a-Glance for Melanie.

Melanie is a fourth grader who is classified as having autism. She reads well; can write some words and phrases with the use of a computer; and communicates through a combination of words, gestures, and symbols. Her IEP objectives include both simplified academic objectives in math, language arts, and the content areas and functional objectives for using communication and self-help skills (see Figure 2.2). Since she was a small child, Melanie has displayed various behaviors that have concerned her parents and teachers. Her problem behaviors and the decisions that her teachers and parents have made about how to support improvements in her behavior are described in the worksheets that accompany each step of the six-step process.

Step 1

Define the Problem and Make Decisions About Priorities

The first step in the process is to define the problem behavior as specifically as possible. If a student has more than one problem behavior, then categorize the seriousness of the behaviors (see Figure 2.3).

Step 1

Define the Problem and Make Decisions About Priorities

Ask: What is the problem?

Describe the problem behavior(s) in observable terms. If there are several problems, determine their level of priority and target the most serious problem(s) for intervention. The three priority levels are 1) destructive, 2) disruptive, and 3) distracting.

Figure 2.3. Step 1: Define the problem and make decisions about priorities.

Identify the Problem Behavior or Behaviors

Clearly identify the problem behavior (i.e., be specific about exactly which observable actions you are concerned). For example, instead of describing the behavior as "Jeremy just won't do anything I tell him to," try to describe exactly what Jeremy does when you tell him to do something. Does Jeremy tear or throw papers when you hand them to him? Does he sit down on the floor and refuse to move when it is time to go to music? Instead of defining the behavior as, "Marge gets upset all the time," try to describe what Marge does that tells you she is upset. Does she cry, scream, and hide under the desk? Does she run after you?

At this point, you should not yet be concerned with *why* the student does these behaviors, and you should not be assigning labels to the behavior such as *aggressive, hyperactive,* or *withdrawn.* The best way to define problem behavior is to carefully observe the student and write down exactly what is seen. Notice the difference between the two lists of descriptions in Table 2.1.

The general labels in the right hand column do not actually describe what the student does. For example, *aggressive* could mean pushing, hitting, biting, yelling, or many other actions. These general labels tell us more about how *we* feel about the behavior than about what the behavior itself looks like. In contrast, the observable behaviors listed in the left hand column are specific and tell exactly what the student did or did not do.

Some students have more than one problem behavior. If several behaviors occur at once in the same situation and are part of the same problem, you should try to describe all of them. For example, a student may put his head down on his desk *and* cry during the same incident. These two behaviors should be described and worked on together. Some problem behaviors may not be closely related, however. A student may cry when left alone but throw things when asked to work on an assignment. These behaviors are probably not closely related.

Determine Priorities

You cannot and should not try to address all of a student's problem behaviors at once. If a

Table 2.1 Differences between observable behavior and general labels

Observable behavior	General labels
Hitting	Aggressive
Yelling	Mean
Crying	Self-stimulatory
Rocking back and forth	Frustrated
Throwing food	Uncooperative
Hitting head on floor	Upset

student has more than one difficult behavior, the team must decide which behaviors are of greatest concern at the time. To decide where to start, it is helpful to think of three priority levels for problem behaviors: *destructive, disruptive,* and *distracting* (Janney, Black, & Ferlo, 1989; also see Evans & Meyer, 1985, for another way to categorize the seriousness of problem behaviors).

Destructive behaviors are health- or life-threatening behaviors to the student or others and always should be top priority. Destructive behaviors include biting or hitting, eye poking, head banging, scratching, cutting, and refusing to eat. Such behaviors always should be addressed through a comprehensive plan for positive behavioral support that includes both proactive intervention strategies and a crisis management plan to prevent harm to the student or others in the case of a serious incident.

Disruptive behaviors are next in priority. These behaviors prevent teaching and learning from taking place or prevent the student from participating in daily living activities at school, at home, or in the community. In the Student Snapshots from Chapter 1, Brian's destroying materials and running from the room would be considered disruptive behaviors. Disruptive behaviors do not include only "acting out" behaviors. Persistent withdrawal from social contact through not speaking, crying, or literally or figuratively pushing other people away also can be disruptive to learning and participation in the classroom. Disruptive behaviors typically should be addressed through a behavioral support plan unless the student has more serious destructive behaviors that should be given top priority.

The third and lowest priority is given to *distracting behaviors*. Such behaviors include echolalia, tics, rocking, hand flapping, and other behaviors that are bothersome but do not really cause any harm. In general, such behaviors are not part of a formal intervention plan unless they either are a high priority to the family or are in danger of becoming more serious if ignored. Intervention for distracting behaviors should focus primarily on teaching alternative social, communication, or self-regulatory behaviors, if such goals are consistent with the student's other IEP goals. Figure 2.4 further describes these three priority levels and the rules for decision making

Destructive	These behaviors are top priority and should always be addressed through a comprehensive plan for positive behavioral support. **Destructive behaviors . . .** • Are health- or life-threatening to the student or others.
Disruptive	These behaviors are second priority. Work on them after you address any destructive behaviors. **Disruptive behaviors . . .** • Interfere with learning (e.g., crying, running away) • Prevent the person from participating in daily activities at school or with the family (e.g., tantrums at bedtime or mealtimes) • Destroy items in a dangerous way (e.g., using a sharp object to destroy furniture—not actions such as tearing paper) • Could become destructive if ignored
Distracting	These behaviors may not require a formal plan unless they are very important to some or all of the team members. Teach replacement behaviors if they are consistent with other IEP goals, but do not develop an intervention plan for these behaviors until the student's more serious needs are being met. **Distracting behaviors . . .** • May interfere with social acceptance (e.g., echolalia or hand flapping in public places) • Damage items (e.g., tearing books and papers) • Could become disruptive if ignored

Figure 2.4. Three priority levels for problem behaviors.

Step 1 Worksheet: Define the Problem and Make Decisions About Priorities

Student: *Melanie* **Date:** *9/12/97*

As specifically as possible, describe the behavior problems of concern—what they look like, how intense they are, and how long each has been a problem. Label the behaviors according to their priority (i.e., destructive, disruptive, or distracting). Circle the behavior(s) that is the highest priority at this time. If several behaviors tend to occur at the same time or in a sequence, consider them jointly.

Description of problem behavior	**Level of priority**
1. *Screaming, yelling (often repeats one–two words)* *Mild episodes (less than 1 minute) several times per day; intense episodes (more than 2 minutes) one–two times per week* *Has been a problem since first grade*	☐ Destructive ☑ Disruptive ☐ Distracting
2. *Hitting and pinching other kids, usually not very hard* *Has occurred occasionally since first grade*	☐ Destructive ☑ Disruptive ☐ Distracting
3. *Rocking to and fro while humming* *Usually mild, easy to distract her from it* *Has done this or something similar since she was a toddler.*	☐ Destructive ☑ Disruptive ☐ Distracting
4.	☐ Destructive ☐ Disruptive ☐ Distracting

For the highest priority behavior(s), describe previous interventions and their effects:

In previous years, teachers mostly have asked her to stop and have sent her from the room when yelling and screaming disrupt instruction. This does not seem to have changed the behavior much. This year, we have tried having her take more breaks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and have worked on using pictures so she can tell us what she wants to do when she starts crying. We have not been very consistent in using the pictures.

Figure 2.5. Step 1 worksheet for Melanie.

that apply to intervening to change behaviors at each level.

Using the Step 1 Worksheet: Define the Problem and Make Decisions About Priorities (see Figure 2.5 for an example), record a description of the problem behavior(s) about which you are concerned. Make your description as specific as possible so that every member of the educational team knows exactly which behavior(s) is being considered. Also, record any information you have about how long the behavior(s) has been a problem.

Then, label the behavior(s) according to its priority: Is the behavior destructive, disruptive, or distracting? Next, the team should decide which behavior(s) is the most important to address at the time. Of course, the decision regarding priorities should be made in conjunction with the student's educational team, including his or her parents. Finally, in the space provided at the bottom of the page, describe interventions that previously have been implemented to alter the target behavior(s) and the effects of those interventions.

Step 2
Gather Information

For Step 2, gather information that will help you to get to know the student better and to learn more about the purpose or purposes the behavior might be serving (see Figure 2.6). Helping students with their difficulties requires us to understand what they are trying to do or to tell us. It also requires us to understand how the environment that we have created influences behavior. This means that we must be observant and really think about what the world seems like from the student's perspective. We need to become detectives, carefully observing and gathering information that can help us to understand the student's behavior.

The process in Step 2: Gather Information and Step 3: Develop an Hypothesis is a streamlined version of a *functional assessment.* Functional assessment involves analyzing the relationship between a person's behavior and the environment, including both the social and the physical aspects of the environment. This process is sometimes referred to as an A-B-C analysis because its purpose is to examine the connections among the **A**ntecedents that predict that the behavior will or will not occur, the **B**ehavior itself, and the **C**onsequences that follow the behavior. For example, in Chapter 1, the authors described Alicia, a tenth-grade student with a behavior disorder who does not get along well with her peers and is even rude toward them. On its surface, Alicia's behavior toward her peers might seem to suggest that she dislikes their company and is not interested in forging positive relationships with them. A functional as-

Step 2
Gather Information

Step 2A. Ask: What is the student's quality of life?
What people, places, choices, and activities are part of the student's life?
What are the student's communication abilities?
What works in supporting and teaching this student?

Step 2B. Ask: Who, what, when, and where about the behavior's occurrence and nonoccurrence.
Who is present?
What is going on?
When does it happen?
Where does it happen?

Ask: Are there setting events that make it more likely that these specific antecedents will lead to the behavior's occurrence?

Decide which data collection tools you will use to collect this information. Gather information until the team is able to answer the questions on the Step 3 Worksheet: Develop an Hypothesis.

Figure 2.6. Step 2: Gather information.

sessment of Alicia's behavior, however, uncovered a pattern in the *antecedents* (the physical environment, the social context, and so forth), Alicia's *behavior,* and the *consequences* of her behavior (what others did and said following Alicia's discourteous comments) (see Table 2.2).

If we repeatedly observe this pattern in Alicia's behavior and also observe that when Alicia does *not* interact in these negative ways she has few or no interactions with her peers, we might hypothesize that the underlying purpose or function of Alicia's taunts is to gain her peers' attention. This information is essential to the development of an individualized plan for positive behavioral support because the plan will include strategies for teaching Alicia new skills that will accomplish the purpose of her behavior—establishing interactions with her peers—in more positive ways.

Step 2: Gather Information consists of two substeps. Step 2A involves gathering general information about the student's lifestyle and history. In Step 2B, A-B-C information about the specific behavior(s) of concern is collected.

Step 2A

Gather Information About the Student's History and Quality of Life

Before gathering information about a specific behavior of concern, it is important first to collect general information about the student and her or his life (e.g., the student's history, health, adult and peer relationships, likes and dislikes, social and communication skills). A form such as the Step 2A Worksheet: Student History and Quality-of-Life Profile (see Figure 2.7 for an example) can be used to record this information. On the worksheet, take inventory of the ways that indicators such as the presence of supportive people, access to objects and activities of interest, and opportunities to make choices and decisions are in place for the student. This inventory should include information about activities and relationships at the student's home as well as at school. Then, assign a baseline rating for each indicator: Is the presence of each indicator good, fair, or poor at this time? It is important to assess the presence of these quality-of-life indicators because many times behavior problems are related to important wants or needs in a person's life (i.e., the need for relationships with others) and the need for skills and opportunities to make choices and express oneself. If there are shortcomings in the presence of these critical indicators, consider incorporating ideas for improvement into the student's plan for positive behavioral support.

This also is the time to examine the student's school records and to talk with people who know the student. Learn as much as you can about the teaching approaches and behavior intervention strategies that have and have not worked for the student in the past. On the Step 2A worksheet, list what works (i.e., strategies that help learning and avoid behavior problems) and does not work (i.e., strategies that hinder learning and incite behavior problems) with the student. You also should find out whether the behavior that is a concern at school also is a problem at the student's home or whether there are behaviors that are problems at the student's home but

Table 2.2 Example of an A-B-C analysis.

Antecedents	Behavior	Consequences
In the cafeteria and in the hall between classes, Alicia sees classmates engaged in conversation, joking, and other casual socializing.	Alicia approaches her peers, interrupts their conversation, calls them names, laughs loudly, and swears.	Alicia's peers stop their conversation, tell her to "get lost," and sometimes make fun of her comments.

not at school. Spaces are provided on the form to catalog the student's ability to communicate various wants and needs, including how the student requests attention, help, and tangible items and how the student expresses protest or rejection of a situation or activity.

Ideally, the team may decide to implement a person-centered planning process, such as Personal Futures Planning (Mount & Zwernik, 1989, 1990), Lifestyle Planning (O'Brien, 1987), or Making Action Plans (MAPS) (Forest & Lusthaus, 1990). These processes are designed to create a holistic plan for designing supports and services that assist the focus person in achieving meaningful goals in his or her school and community.

Step 2B
Gather Information About Specific Behaviors of Concern

In addition to finding answers to general lifestyle questions, gather information about the specific behavior(s) of concern to conduct a functional assessment. Specifically, gather three types of information (see Table 2.3).

The next section first explains the nature of the A-B-C (antecedent–behavior–consequence) information that is needed and then describes and illustrates some data col-

Step 2A Worksheet: Student History and Quality-of-Life Profile

Focus student *Melanie* **Date** *10/24/96*

People providing information *fourth-grade teacher, special education case manager, parents, speech-language pathologist, instructional assistant*

Ratings: G = Good F = Fair P = Poor

Indicator	How is indicator in place?	Rating
Supportive people	• *Lives with family, including older brother and sister; sees maternal grandparents regularly* • *Clarissa, a classmate, lives in neighborhood and visits after school* • *Most classmates react fairly positively toward her*	*F*
Places: school	• *Participates in activities in all areas of the school except total-school activities that take place in multi-purpose room*	*F*
Places: community	• *Most stores, shops, restaurants frequented by family* • *No community recreation other than occasional walks to the park; brother and sister use swimming pool, play soccer and basketball*	*F*
Likes/interests	• *Books and magazines* • *Computer—for writing* • *Art: coloring, watercolors*	*G*
Choices/decisions	• *What to wear, eat, etc.—same as those made by siblings* • *Difficulty choosing activities at recess, other free times at school*	*F*

(continued)

Figure 2.7. Step 2A worksheet for Melanie. (Contributed by Cynthia R. Pitonyak.)

Figure 2.7. *(continued)*

What has worked in the past?	**What does not work?**
Give her a break to look at a book, take a walk	*Time out—she prefers it*
Prefers "hands-on" as long as she doesn't have to get her hands messy	*Too many paper and pencil tasks*
Let her know the schedule, what's coming up	*Touching her when she's upset*
	Loud noises, lots of people

What is the student's primary method of communication (e.g., speech, signs, gestures, electronic devices)?

Uses a variety of methods: single words and two- to three-word sentences for basic wants and needs; combination of signs and speech to answer instructional questions; prefers using computer over writing on paper for journal writing, class assignments

How does the student communicate these purposes?

1. Ask for attention: *Tugs on your arm, climbs in your lap; sometimes says your name*
2. Ask for help: *Hard to tell; sometimes brings an object to you for help*
3. Ask for tangible items (e.g., food, drink, objects): *Gets it herself if possible; uses words for food, juice*
4. Protest/reject a situation or activity: *Pushes you or the activity away; screams; sometimes says "No!"*

Describe any health concerns or medication that may be affecting the student's mood or behavior:

None at this time; has regular checkups

Other important information or comments:

lection tools that can be used to gather this information.

Antecedents Information about what is going on when the behavior occurs—or does not occur—helps reveal how the environment is related to the behavior. For example, if the behavior tends to occur more often when the student is left alone than when she or he is working with an adult or with other students, then the purpose of the behavior may be to get attention. If you can discover what antecedent stimuli (i.e., people, places,

Table 2.3. Types of information gathered during A-B-C analysis.

The **antecedents** to the behavior	The **behavior** itself	The **consequences** that follow the behavior
What people, places, things, or activities predict the behavior(s) will or will not occur?	*How often or how long does it occur, and how intense is it?*	*What tends to happen after the behavior?*

things, or activities) seem to trigger the behavior, you can change some of those stimuli (at least temporarily) and sometimes prevent problems from occurring. In addition to the effects of specific antecedents on behavior, behavior also can be influenced by setting events (see Figure 2.8). *Setting events* are biological, social, or physical incidents or circumstances that happen before a specific antecedent and increase the likelihood that the specific antecedent will actually trigger the problem behavior. This is similar to the phenomenon of "having a bad day" or "getting up on the wrong side of the bed." Once a certain event happens, other things start going wrong.

Jenny, a first grader who speaks only a few words, sometimes screams and cries when she is asked to share her favorite tricycle or other playground equipment at recess. One day at recess, a classmate tried to persuade Jenny to give up the tricycle she was riding, and Jenny became especially upset; she screamed, cried, and hit herself on the face. The teacher later found out from Jenny's parents that Jenny had been up late the night before because her younger sister had a bad cold, and Jenny had not had time to eat as much breakfast as usual. Not getting enough sleep and not having enough breakfast did not cause Jenny to have a difficult time on the playground, but these circumstances served as setting events for the specific antecedent of the classmate's attempt to persuade Jenny to relinquish the tricycle.

When gathering information about specific antecedents, look for answers to types of "who, what, when, and where" questions:

1. **Who?** *The answers to "who" questions help you to see whether particular people or groups are related to the problem behavior.*
   Who is present when the problem behavior occurs?
   Who is present when the problem behavior seldom or never occurs?
   How many people?
   Is someone about to come in or about to leave?
   Are adults, children, teachers, parents, or strangers present?
2. **What?** *The answers to "what" questions help you discover whether certain tasks or activities are related to the problem behavior.*
   What is going on when the problem behavior occurs?
   What is going on when the problem behavior seldom or never occurs?

What the Research Says

Horner, Vaughn, Day, and Ard (1996) studied the influence of setting events on the problem behaviors of 15 adolescents and young adults with severe disabilities. The individuals all had long histories of problem behaviors, including a variety of disruptive and self-injurious behaviors. A functional assessment was conducted to gather data on the frequency of problem behaviors, the specific antecedent stimuli that preceded them, and the function of the problem behaviors. The occurrence of a number of setting events that staff in the individuals' homes thought likely to be related to problem behaviors also was monitored. Data were collected around the clock for more than 4 months.

The researchers then compared the likelihood of each problem behavior on the days with and without setting events. They found that for 13 of the 15 people in the study, problem behaviors were twice as likely to occur on days with the targeted setting events than on days without the targeted setting events. The setting events that influenced the participants' behavior included pain, aversive events (e.g., being denied a planned outing, losing a game, having a fight on the bus and then being reprimanded), fatigue, and changes in staff or the schedule.

Figure 2.8. Research findings on setting events and problem behavior.

Is the student being asked to do a particular type of task?
Is it math, reading, gym, or music time?
Is it free, unstructured time?
Is the student being asked to do something too easy or too hard?
Is it almost time to start a different activity?
Is the student having to wait for help, attention, or a turn?

3. **When?** *The answers to "when" questions help you determine whether times, days of the week, and schedules are related to the problem behavior.*
   When does the problem behavior occur?
   When does the problem behavior almost never occur?
   Every morning?
   Only on Monday morning?
   On Friday afternoon?
   Before lunch?
   Just before the bus arrives?
4. **Where?** *The answers to "where" questions help you understand whether places and spaces are related to the problem behavior.*
   Where does the problem behavior occur?
   Where does the problem behavior seldom or never occur?
   On the playground?
   In the classroom?
   At home?
   In the grocery store?
   At the movies?
   On the bus?
   In a small space or a large, open space?

The answers to the "who, what, when, and where" questions, along with information about setting events that make particular stimuli more likely to trigger the behavior (see Figure 2.6), can help uncover patterns in the antecedents that are associated with the problem behavior. A plan for positive behavioral support includes preventing problem behaviors by changing some of the situations that tend to precede problems.

The Behavior Itself A second type of information to gather involves counting or timing the problem behavior. This can be difficult in a classroom situation, but it is a good idea to gather baseline data about how frequently or how long a problem behavior occurs so that you can know for sure whether the plan you develop is helping. Sometimes the plan helps *you* feel like you are doing something to improve the situation, but it has few actual effects on the problem behavior itself.

If the problem behavior has a clear starting and stopping point, then count how often the behavior occurs. For example, if the problem behavior is hitting other people, count the *frequency* with which this happens. If the problem behavior is one that does not have a clear stopping or starting point or if it occurs for greatly varying periods of time, then measure how long each instance lasts. For example, if the student cries and the episodes sometimes last just a few minutes but at other times last for 10 minutes or more, then simply counting the number of times that the student cries would not enable you to tell whether the amount of time spent crying was decreasing over time. A student could cry five times in one day for a total of 5 minutes, or he or she could cry five times in one day for a total of 90 minutes. In this case, the *duration* of the crying is the important information, not the number of times the student cries.

Consequences The third type of information to gather is about the consequences or what happens after the behavior occurs. Used in this sense, the term *consequences* refers not only to planned rewards or punishments that are being used but also to any event that happens following the behavior (e.g., Do other people leave the student alone? Does a crowd of people gather? Does the student obtain some object that she or he had wanted? Do other students laugh? Is the student reprimanded by an adult?).

The assumption is that the student would not continue to use the behavior unless it was effective—at least some of the time—in helping to meet some need or purpose. Therefore, gather information about what happens after the behavior to see what purpose it is accomplishing. When thinking about how consequences maintain a behavior, it is important to realize that your intentions do not necessarily match the way your actions affect another person's behavior. For example, you may think that reprimanding a student for acting out serves as a punishment and that the student will act out less in the future if your reprimands are consistent. If the purpose of the student's acting out is to gain attention, however, then your attention may be rewarding to the student, even if you believe that a reprimand is a negative consequence or punishment.

Data Collection Tools for Step 2B: Gather Information About Behaviors of Concern

This section examines some tools for gathering and analyzing information about the antecedents, the behavior, and the consequences. The amount of time and effort that the educational team spends gathering information depends on many factors, including whether this is a new or old problem and how much the behavior varies from one situation or one day to another. In some cases, the team may already have informally observed and gathered much of the information needed to give a fairly clear picture of the behavior's antecedents, its frequency or duration, and its typical consequences. It is strongly urged, however, that you systematically observe and record baseline data about the behavior. It is sometimes amazing how different "hunches" can be from actual, observable events.

Using the data collection tools described next requires some commitment of time and energy, but these tools are designed to be as easy to use as possible. Following each tool description are comments about the particular situations for which the tool is best used. These same tools are used to monitor the problem behavior after the behavioral support plan is in place.

Student Schedule Analysis The Student Schedule Analysis (see Figure 2.9 for an example) is a very simple yet helpful way to start looking for patterns in the student's behavior and making decisions about where intervention should begin. This form also is a good way to keep a record of changes that are made in the student's school day as part of the behavioral support plan. After entering the student's daily schedule in the first two columns, the classroom teacher and other educational team members who are familiar with the student's performance on a typical day evaluate the typical frequency and intensity of the behavior during each class or activity. The third, fourth, and fifth columns on the form provide spaces to describe the behavior, the grouping arrangement, the task type (i.e., whether the activity involves paper and pencil, oral communication, or hands-on learning), and the staff member or members who are with the student at that time. You may find that you want to use the columns on the Student Schedule Analysis form for factors other than the ones included in Figure 2.9. For example, if you have a hunch that the problem behavior is related to the presence of specific classmates, you could use the column on grouping to note the particular classmates that the student is grouped with during small-group activities. If you think there may be a relationship between the behavior and the type of seating arrangement or positioning, you could use one column to note whether the student is positioned, for example, at a desk, in a wheelchair, or on the floor for each activity.

Completing a Student Schedule Analysis form when developing a formal behavioral support plan for a student is very helpful. In addition to helping reveal patterns in the student's behavior, it is useful to have a record of how successful the classroom teacher and other team members perceive each class or activity to be. Also collect more objective observational data on the behavior so that you can tell whether the behavior does, in fact, change over time. The teacher's and other people's opinions about whether the problem behavior improves or worsens is another meaningful indicator of the successfulness of a behavioral support plan.

Interval Recording and the Scatter Plot Use a data collection tool such as the Interval

Student Schedule Analysis

Student *Melanie*
Class *Ramirez/ fourth-grade*
Date *9-12-97*

Staff *Ramirez/ fourth-grade teacher* **name/role** *Larsen/assistant* **name/role** ____ **name/role**
Pitonyak/Special education teacher **name/role** *Van Sant/Speech-language* **name/role** ____ **name/role**

Target behavior(s) *yelling, screaming, and crying*

Time	Class/activity	**Behavior:** + = mild/rare – = excessive V = varies	**Grouping:** I = independent 1:1 = one-to-one SG = small group LG = large group	**Task type:** P=paper/pencil O=oral H=hands-on C = computer	**Staff** L = Larsen R = Ramirez P = Pitonyak V = Van Sant
9:00 A.M.	Journal (on computer)	+	I or 1:1	C	L
9:20 A.M.	Oral reading/speech on Tues.–Thurs.	– /+	LG / 1:1	O / O & P	R / V
9:45 A.M.	Reading: Shared reading, small-group lessons	+	I / SG	P / O	P
10:30 A.M.	Language skills/spelling	–	LG	O / P	R
11:00 A.M.	Theme activities	+	SG	H	R
11:30 A.M.	Specials: Mon. & Wed. Physical education / Tues. art/Thurs. musi/Fri. library	–/+/–/+	LG	H	varies
12:00 P.M.	Lunch	–	LG	H	L
12:30 P.M.	Math	+	SG or 1:1	H / P	R
1:45 P.M.	Content areas	+	SG	H	R & L
2:15 P.M.	Recess	V	varies	H	L
2:30 P.M.	Social skills/class meetings/sharing time	V	SG/ LG/ LG	O / O	P & R

Figure 2.9. Student schedule analysis for Melanie. (From Meyer, L., & Janney, R. [1989]. User-friendly measures of meaningful outcomes: Evaluating behavioral interventions. Journal of The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 14[4], 267. © 1989 JASH; adapted by permission.)

Recording/Scatter Plot Form (see Figure 2.10 for an example) to collect data on how often a behavior or set of behaviors occur. *Interval recording* involves counting the frequency (or duration) with which a behavior occurs during predetermined time periods throughout the day.

The Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form can be used in several different ways. One way is to conduct a *frequency count:* The observer tallies each time the behavior occurs during each time period. A second way is to create a *scatter plot* (Touchette, MacDonald, & Langer, 1985), a method that provides an estimate of the behavior's frequency. To create a scatter plot, use a code to record the relative frequency of the behavior during each time interval. For example, in Figure 2.10 an open circle (○) was used to indicate that the behavior had occurred once during a 30-minute time period. The circle was filled in (●) to show more than one occurrence of the be-

Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form

Used for: ___ Frequency count (tally each time behavior occurs within each interval)
✓ Scatter plot (Key: ○ = 1 occurrence; ● = more than 1 occurrence; × = "crisis")

Student: *Melanie* **Dates:** *9/12/97–9/16/97*

Behavior(s): *Screaming and crying (do not count if single shriek); "crisis" = over 2 minutes*

Time	Activity	Monday 9/12/97	Tuesday 9/13/97	Wednesday 9/14/97	Thursday 9/15/97	Friday 9/16/97
8:30 A.M.	*bus*	○	○			○
9:00 A.M.	*arrival/journal*					
9:30 A.M.	*oral reading/ language*	●	○	●	●	●
10:00 A.M.	*shared reading*					
10:30 A.M.	*language skills/ spelling*	●	● ×	●	○	●
11:00 A.M.	*theme activities*					
11:30 A.M.	*specials*	● *(PE)*	○ *(music)*	● *(PE)*	○ *(art)*	*(library)*
12:00 P.M.	*lunch*	●	●	●	○	○
12:30 P.M.	*math*			○		
1:00 P.M.	*content areas*				○	
1:30 P.M.	*recess*	●	○	●	○	●
2:00 P.M.	*social skills/ class meetings*					
2:30 P.M.	*preparation for departure*					
○ + ● = Total		*1 + 5 = 6*	*4 + 2 = 6*	*1 + 5 = 6*	*5 + 1 = 6*	*2 + 3 = 5*

Weekly Total = *13 + 16 = 29 plus 1 "crisis" incident* Average per day = *5.8*

Figure 2.10. Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form for Melanie.

havior. In other words, the first time the behavior occurred, the teacher or assistant recording the data drew an open circle. Then, if the behavior occurred a second time during that 30-minute interval, the open circle was filled in. Further instances of the behavior were not counted again until the next interval began.

When creating a scatter plot, it is important to use intervals that are short enough to enable you to estimate the behavior's frequency as closely as possible. For instance, if the time intervals are 30 minutes and the behavior sometimes occurs up to ten times per interval, then you will not have any record of whether the behavior occurred two times or ten times during an interval. This means that the recording method could mask a great deal of change in the student's behavior. If the time intervals are 10 minutes long and the behavior typically occurs between one and three times per interval, a scatter plot will accurately reflect a change in the behavior. When using the Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form, try to establish a time interval that will reliably show variations in the behavior, yet still be feasible for data collection in a classroom situation.

Use of the interval recording form has a great advantage over simply keeping a running tally of the number of times the behavior occurs daily. Interval recording provides information about the relative frequency of the behavior during different time periods so that you can develop hypotheses about factors that may be influencing the behavior. By examining the intervals when the behavior is most and least likely to occur, you can begin to identify particular people, types of activities, amounts of attention, and types or intensity of demands that tend to trigger the problem behavior. For example, Figure 2.10 shows that Melanie was more likely to scream and cry during oral reading and language skills lessons, lunch, physical education, and recess. Her support team analyzed what those times of day had in common. They realized that lunch, physical education, and recess all involved large groups of students and lots of noise and physical activity. The problematic reading and language skills intervals involved large-group activities that required a lot of waiting and few opportunities to respond actively. In contrast, the shared reading and theme activities that were part of the morning language arts and reading block involved more individual or small-group activities, which provided many more opportunities for Melanie to manipulate and respond to materials. This information gave the educational team a starting point for developing ways to alter the antecedents to make the periods when Melanie was most likely to scream and cry more similar to the time periods when she was least likely to exhibit problem behaviors.

A-B-C Observations *A-B-C recording* involves observing the student in a variety of situations and immediately writing down 1) the antecedents to the student's actions; 2) the student's behaviors; and 3) the consequences, or anything that happens after the student's actions. An additional column may be added to the A-B-C Observation Form (see Figure 2.11 for an example) to allow the observer to record a hypothesis about the purpose or function of the problem behavior that was observed. In terms of requiring staff time and effort, A-B-C observations are probably the most difficult type of information-gathering discussed here, however, these observations can be extremely helpful for problem solving.

Figure 2.11 shows a sample A-B-C observation of Sue, a third grader who is classified as having a behavior disorder. Sue's teachers were concerned about a number of related behaviors that prevented Sue from participating in class activities. The specific behaviors included crying, yelling, and arguing with her classmates. A consultant from a nearby university spent a day observing Sue in her daily activities. The A-B-C observations shown in Figure 2.11 were recorded during physical education class, which took place on the blacktop area of the school playground. When Sue's educational team examined the A-B-C observations, they noticed right away that when Sue *was* participating appropriately in lessons and activities (e.g., when she

A-B-C Observation Form

Student *Sue* **Day/date(s)** *Monday, 4/12/96*
Environment/activity *Physical education outside on blacktop* **Observer** *R. Janney*

Target behavior(s) *"Off task": yelling/screaming at peers, taunting peers, and crying*

Time	**Antecedents** What happened before the behavior?	**Behavior** What did the student do?	**Consequences** What happened after the behavior?
9:15 A.M.	*Teacher: "Ready! Ten push ups." Blows whistle*	*Sue attempts some push ups. She talks with a peer, Cassie, as she does push ups.*	*No response from teacher or aide*
	The teacher blows a whistle and tells students to run around the field.	*Sue walks with a peer. They are the last ones in the group.*	*Teacher: "Hurry up, Cassie, you can run."*
	Cassie says to Sue, "Come on!"	*Sue and Cassie run the rest of the way around the field.*	*No response from teacher or aide*
9:25 A.M.	*Kickball game*	*Sue is "out," but she takes the ball with her to the sideline.* *Sue yells, "You shut up! Shut up!"*	*Kids: "You're not supposed to do that!" The aide tells Sue's peers to drop the subject, goes to Sue, and pats her on the shoulder.*

Figure 2.11. A-B-C observation form for Sue.

was running around the field or playing kickball), the consequences did *not* include attention or encouragement from the teacher or the classroom assistant. However, when Sue was exhibiting the behaviors that were the focus of concern (e.g., yelling at her classmates), the consequences *were* attention and support from the adults. This example shows that A-B-C recording can provide helpful information about how the adults' responses to a student's behavior can actually help a problem behavior work better for a student than a positive behavior.

It may not be feasible for a teacher to do A-B-C recording while teaching a lesson; however, a collaborating teacher, a teaching assistant, a school psychologist, a student teacher, or other support personnel may be able to conduct some A-B-C observations for the educational team. If you do schedule someone to observe and record the student's behavior, it is important to have the observer present during a variety of times of day, including times that are usually unsuccessful as well as times that tend to be more successful for the student. To prevent the student from feeling as if she or he is under a microscope, it is important for the observer not to shadow the student too closely and to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Incident Record If the student has episodes of seriously disruptive or destructive behavior—especially those that call for the use of a crisis management plan—then keep an anecdotal record of such incidents. The completed Incident Record shown in Figure 2.12 is designed for maintaining information about the frequency and intensity of such critical

Incident Record

Student *Melanie* **Completed by** *Janice (instructional assistant)*
Time *9:25 a.m.* **Where** *Classroom* **Date/day of week** *Monday, 9/30/97*
Class and activity *Language arts, skill review, and worksheet*
Staff present *Janice (assistant), Ms. Ramirez (fourth-grade teacher)*
Students present *all 24 classmates, most of them sitting at their desks*

1. **What happened just before the incident?**
   Melanie was writing her journal on the computer. At 9:25, I told her to finish up because it would be time for language skills at 9:30. When Ms. Ramirez told the class to put away their journals and get out their skills packets, Melanie did not stop working on the computer. I showed her the picture for language skills and asked her to finish her journal and come to her desk.
2. **What did the student do?**
   Melanie pushed the picture schedule away and yelled, "No, no, no, no!" When I touched Melanie's face to get her to look at me, she pushed my hand away and started to scream. I held up the picture again and told her that it was time for language skills, so she needed to put her journal away and sit in her desk. Then she really started screaming. I could not get her to budge, so Ms. Ramirez went to get Cyndi to see if we could get Melanie out in the hall to calm her down.
3. **What happened immediately after the incident?**
   Cyndi and I got on either side of Melanie and escorted her out into the hall. We took her to the conference room, taking with us the page she had printed for her journal and the adapted skill worksheet Ms. Ramirez was going to have her do. Melanie calmed down in about 5 minutes after we got there. Cyndi helped her read the journal page, prompted her through the worksheet, then showed her the picture schedule so she'd know what was coming next. When we got back to the classroom, the kids were doing their Williamsburg projects, and she joined right in with her group.
4. **What antecedents may have triggered the behavior? What is your hypothesis about the purpose?**
   I think she still doesn't understand how we know when one activity ends and the next begins. She obviously wanted to avoid the language skills, even though the work has been adapted for her.
5. **What might prevent the behavior or interrupt it more effectively in the future?**
   We need to better communicate to Melanie the starting and stopping points of activities. I also think I goofed by touching her face. Also, it might help to have something to distract her when she starts getting really out of control.

Figure 2.12. Incident record for Melanie. (From Meyer, L., & Janney, R. [1989]. User-friendly measures of meaningful outcomes: Evaluating behavioral interventions. *Journal of The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 14*[4], 268. © 1989 JASH; adapted by permission.)

episodes. The form also is designed to encourage staff to engage in problem solving for reasons the incident occurred and how it might have been avoided. For example, the person completing the Incident Record is asked to think about possible antecedents that helped trigger the incident, what the function of the problem behavior might have been, and how similar problems might be avoided in the future. The information on Incident Records must be as detailed and specific as possible if it is to be useful as part of the functional assessment. The adult who was most closely involved with the student during the incident should complete the Incident Record as soon as possible following the episode, while the events are still fresh in his or her mind.

A Plan for Gathering Information

After examining these and other tools for collecting information, the educational team must decide on a plan for gathering information. This means deciding 1) which data collection tools will be used, 2) which days or times will be observed, and 3) who will use each tool. At a support team meeting, use a Team Meeting Agenda and Minutes form (see Figure 1.7 for an example) to list the information-gathering tools that you will use, and note who will be responsible for using each tool and when. It is important to gather information about the student's behavior not only during times when the student tends to be successful but also during times when the student displays behavior problems. Also, if data are not collected every day, it is better to use an alternating day schedule rather than always collecting data on the same days of the week. For example, you might use the Interval Recording/Scatter Plot Form on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday one week and then on Tuesday and Thursday of the following week.

There is no simple answer to the question of how long to collect baseline data before designing and using a behavioral support plan; however, the plan will be based on the hypothesis about the function of the behavior, the antecedents that predict the behavior, and the consequences that are maintaining the behavior. This hypothesis is developed in the next step of the process, Step 3 (see Figure 2.13). This means that the team should gather enough information to be able to answer the questions asked in the Step 3 Worksheet: Develop an Hypothesis (see Figure 2.14 for an example). As a general guideline, try gathering observational information about the behavior for at least 1 week. Then see whether team members are able to agree on answers to the questions in the Step 3 worksheet. If the team is not able to answer the questions, then try another week of information gathering. Remember to continue to collect certain types of data on the behavior as you implement the plan to judge whether the plan is working.

Step 3
Develop an Hypothesis

Step 3 in the process is to develop an hypothesis about the behavior. Your hypothesis will attempt to explain the relationship among the antecedents, the behavior, and the consequences observed. What antecedents (i.e., who, what, when, and where; which setting events) predict that the behavior will or will not occur? What is the student's purpose in using the behavior? What consequences appear to be maintaining the behavior? Once the team has gathered enough information, answer the questions on the Step 3 worksheet: Develop an Hypothesis (provided in Appendix A). The Step 3 worksheet also asks for information about the current frequency and/or duration of the target behavior.

Step 3
Develop an Hypothesis

Ask: Why does the student keep doing this?
What is the purpose of the behavior?
What antecedents predict the behavior will or will not occur?
How are the consequences helping the behavior work for the student?

Figure 2.13. Step 3: Develop an hypothesis.

Step 3 Worksheet: Develop an Hypothesis

Student *Melanie* **Date** *10/12/97*

Behavior *yelling, screaming, and crying*

Who is present . . .

When the behavior tends to occur?	When the behavior almost never occurs?
Ms. Ramirez (fourth-grade teacher)	*Working alone*
Janice (instructional assistant)	*Cyndi (special education teacher)*
Large groups of students	*Clarissa (classmate)*

What is going on . . .

When the behavior tends to occur?	When the behavior almost never occurs?
Spelling, language skills	*Journal writing, individual art activities*
Physical education, lunch, recess if noise level is high	*Math, content areas if hands-on*
	Theme activities

When does the behavior . . .

Tend to occur?	Almost never occur?
More related to the activity than time of day or day of week	

Where does the behavior . . .

Tend to occur?	Almost never occur?
Classroom, especially at desk	*Reading and computer areas*
Hallways to and from physical education and music Cafeteria	*Small-group table*

What **setting events** make the behavior more likely to occur?

Melanie being up late at night and/or getting up late in the morning so she misses the bus and her mom brings her to school

What **consequences** seem to be maintaining the behavior?

We give up on getting her to do the activity, and she takes a walk or does artwork.

On average, **how often** does the behavior occur . . .

Per hour? *1 time* Per day? *5.8 times* Per week? *30 times*

On average, **how long** does the behavior occur . . .

Per episode? *less than 2 minutes*

The main **purpose(s)** of the behavior seem to be . . .

Escape/avoidance of tasks or places she doesn't like (e.g., waiting, no materials, large groups, noise)

Figure 2.14. Step 3 worksheet for Melanie.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the positive behavioral supports approach is based on the assumption that if one wants to teach people better ways of getting what they want or need, one has to know their *purpose.* This is similar to asking "Why does the behavior occur?" except that the goal is not trying to figure out why the person *started* doing the behavior but rather why she or he *continues* to use the behavior. In other words, the answer to the question "Why does the behavior occur?" is an hypothesis about which purpose(s) the behavior serves: 1) getting attention, 2) escape or avoidance, 3) getting something tangible, 4) self-regulation, or 5) play or entertainment (also see Figure 1.3).

Often, the information that has been gathered about the antecedents and consequences of the behavior reveal patterns that aid in developing the hypothesis about the behavior's purpose(s), as illustrated by the following Student Snapshots.

Student Snapshots

When Darin had to work independently on lengthy tasks—even tasks that were at an appropriate skill level—he would make no attempt to do the assignment and would instead tell jokes and talk to his classmates. When Darin engaged in these "off-task" behaviors, his classmates would laugh, and the classroom teacher would come to Darin's desk and remind him of the consequences of not completing his classwork. However, when Darin was involved in small-group activities directed by the classroom teacher or the special education teacher, he did relatively well on his schoolwork. The team's hypothesis about the purpose of Darin's off-task behavior was that it served the purpose of getting attention *when he had to work alone and did not receive ongoing encouragement and guidance from a teacher or a peer.*

Sofie's problem behavior was throwing materials and sometimes hitting people on the arm or hand. When the team used a scatter plot to analyze the antecedents of Sofie's throwing and hitting, they noticed that the behaviors tended to occur at about the same times each day, during intensive one-to-one instructional sessions with the special education teacher or assistant. Incident records of the times when Sofie hit other people showed that the consequence for hitting was to take Sofie to a time-out chair at the back of the classroom, where she had to sit for 10 minutes. Because Sofie's one-to-one instructional sessions were only about 10 minutes long, it usually was time for the next activity when Sofie had completed her time-out, so she never did complete the tasks provided during her one-to-one instruction. Sofie's hitting did not decrease during the 2 weeks that the team gathered information. The team hypothesized that the purpose of Sofie's throwing and hitting might be to escape from the intensive demands of one-to-one instruction. The time-out, which had been intended as a punishment for hitting, actually was reinforcement for Sofie, who was using the hitting to escape *from a situation she found difficult.*

Table 2.4 lists several examples of the functional relationships among antecedents, behaviors, and consequences. These are the sort of patterns to look for when analyzing the information about the behavior the team has gathered.

Functional Analysis: Manipulating the Environment When the Function of a Behavior Is Not Clear

Developing an hypothesis about the purpose of the problem behavior is one of the most important steps in developing a plan for positive behavioral support. It also can be a very difficult step. In some cases, such as those of Darin and Sofie that were previously described, the patterns are quite obvious and the function of the problem behavior is clear. In other cases, it is not so easy to identify the function of the behavior. One reason for the difficulty is that some students may use a particular problem behavior for more than one

Table 2.4 Examples of functional relationships among antecedents, behaviors, and consequences

Antecedent	**Behavior**	**Consequences**	**Possible Function**
When Darin must work independently on assignments	He tells jokes and talks with classmates instead of working.	His classmates laugh; the teacher increases proximity and gives a warning.	Attention
When Sofie is in a one-to-one instructional session with a teacher or aide	She throws materials and hits the teacher or aide.	She is taken to a time-out chair at the back of the room, and instruction stops.	Escape from intensive, one-to-one task demands
When Mike goes to physical education, recess, lunch, music, or an assembly	He screams, holds his hands over his ears, and sits in a corner of the room.	He is taken for a walk or goes back to the classroom.	Avoidance of noise and large, open spaces

purpose. For example, a student with an intellectual disability and no speech may cry in order to say "I want help," "This is too hard," or "I don't feel well." Some students may use several different problem behaviors for the same purpose. A student may express anger or frustration in several different ways, such as through tantrums, self-injury, and/or hitting other people. When one considers how difficult it can be even for adults to understand their own feelings and behaviors, it is not surprising that children's behaviors can be just as complex.

In some cases, it can be tempting to conclude that a behavior happens "for no reason" or has no pattern at all. In actuality, this seldom is the case. If there truly is no discernable pattern to the behavior and it is equally as likely to occur in every situation, it is possible that the behavior is related to a physiological problem. For example, John, a student who had mental retardation and did not talk except for a few simple words, began slapping the side of his face with his hand, a behavior that he had not done in the past. He did this morning, noon, and night—even when he was doing activities that he had once enjoyed. John's parents had a hunch that something might be wrong with John's teeth, and they took him to see a dentist. The dentist discovered that John had a cavity. John's support team theorized that John's slapping served as a self-regulatory function—it was a way to numb the pain of the toothache. Indeed, John stopped slapping his face when the cavity was filled and he no longer experienced the pain.

Testing Competing Hypotheses About the Function of a Behavior In cases for which the team does not know the purpose or function of the problem behavior for certain, several different hypotheses may need to be developed and tested. Testing hypotheses requires observing the student under different conditions to determine what function the behavior serves for the student. Purposefully manipulating the variables that the functional assessment has revealed to be possibly related to the behavior of concern and then observing the effects on the student's behavior technically is called a *functional analysis.* This procedure allows educators to be more certain about the triggers of the behavior and the function or purpose that it serves for the student. It is not recommended that the sort of extensive, precise functional analyses that are conducted in controlled research environments be conducted in classrooms. Educators can, however, make simple, short-term alterations to typically occurring activities that will enable them to be more accurate in designing intervention plans that are related to the spe-

"Hunch" about the behavior's function	Function test
Getting attention	Ask the student to work or play quietly while the adult works in another area of the room. Observe and compare the student's behavior under two conditions: 1) based on a calculation of the average frequency of the behavior, the adult regularly provides attention before the student does the behavior (e.g., "How are you doing?" "That looks great."); and 2) the adult attends to the student two or three times less often than in condition 1. If the behavior occurs less frequently during condition 1, the function of the behavior is likely to be getting attention.
Escape or avoidance	Present the student with the task, activity, or attention in question. Observe the student's behavior when allowed to escape from the situation (e.g., remove the task) if the behavior occurs. Compare the student's behavior under this condition with a situation when the demand or activity is not present (e.g., free play, choice time).
Getting something tangible	Set up situations in which the desired object is present but not accessible to the student. When the behavior occurs, give the student the item. Compare the student's behavior in this condition with his or her behavior in situations in which the item is freely available.
Self-regulation	Observe the student in a place or situation in which the stimulus that you believe is causing the increased arousal level or anxiety is present (e.g., in the cafeteria if you think rocking occurs because of the anxiety produced by loud noises). Compare the student's behavior with his or her behavior in a place or situation in which that stimulus is not present (e.g., the reading corner of the classroom).
Play	Observe the student when she or he is left alone without an activity to do. Compare the frequency and intensity of the behavior with situations when the student is given a variety of preferred tasks and activities from which to choose.

Figure 2.15. Testing the function of problem behaviors. (Source: O'Neill, R.E., Horner, R.H., Albin, R.W., Sprague, J.R., Storey, K., & Newton, J.S., 1997.)

cific function of the target behavior. The functional analysis tests that educators conduct depend on their hunch about the purpose(s) of the problem behavior.

As shown in Figure 2.15, each of the five possible functions of problem behavior can be tested by observing how the student behaves when the consequences that would maintain (or reinforce) that function are present or not present. For example, if the hunch is that the student's running from his seat is to escape from a difficult task, then observe whether the behavior occurs more frequently when the student is requested to do a difficult task or assignment and less frequently when he is allowed to have free time. If the hunch that the function of a student's yelling is to get attention, then observe the student when she does and does not receive a teacher's attention for yelling. It usually is necessary to conduct a function test several times to be certain that the variables that are being manipulated are, indeed, the ones that are influencing the behavior. It also can be helpful to test more than one hunch about the possible function of a behavior (O'Neill et al., 1997).

For example, Jason's support team wanted to determine the function of Jason's screaming and throwing things. They noted that the problem behaviors were most likely to occur during the "seatwork" portion of math and language arts lessons. A-B-C observations were inconclusive regarding how the consequences given Jason after his incidents of yelling and throwing were maintaining the behavior. Sometimes an adult would go to

Jason, and the behavior would stop; however, at other times the behavior continued even when Jason received attention. The team was not sure whether the function of Jason's problem behaviors was to obtain social attention from the teacher or to escape from task demands. Therefore, the team tested both the "attention" and "escape" hypotheses. During seatwork time on Monday and Wednesday, Jason's special education teacher went to his desk and patted him on the shoulder or gave verbal attention every 2 minutes. (Baseline data had shown that Jason yelled and threw things approximately once every 4 minutes during seatwork; Jason's teacher wanted to give him attention before he had an opportunity to yell.) On Tuesday and Thursday, Jason's teacher only gave Jason attention during seatwork sessions once every 4 minutes. As she performed this function test, the special education teacher kept a count of the number of times Jason yelled under each condition. It was clear that giving Jason attention before he yelled prevented the behavior, which supported the hypothesis that the function of Jason's behavior was to gain attention.

Unit 2 Activity Sheets

Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Behavior Observation Scenarios

1. You will be observing the instructor for the next hour and during your break. You are responsible for recording a tally on your behavior chart under the heading "gives emphasis" for each time you observe the instructor emphasizing a point. You are also responsible for noting the length of time the emphasis takes place. You should record the length of time in seconds, including the time that the emphasizing behavior begins and ends. Note that you will be recording these data in five-minute intervals on the observation chart. Ignore all other behavior boxes on your observation chart.

2. Choose a volunteer from your group who is willing to be observed. You will be observing this student for the next hour and during your break. After you choose the student, you should have no further conversation about the behaviors that you will be observing. You will be observing two behaviors: talking and leaving the room. Each time the student performs either behavior you should mark a tally on your observation chart (use a different symbol for each behavior so that you will be able to distinguish talking from leaving the room). Note the length of time the student is gone when he/she leaves the room. You should record the length of time in seconds, including the time that the leaving the room behavior begins and ends. Record these data in five-minute intervals on the observation chart. Ignore all other behavior boxes on your observation chart.

3. You will be observing the instructor for the next hour and during your break. You are responsible for observing three behaviors: saying "uh," pointing to a student, and giving a direction. Each time the instructor performs any of these behaviors you should mark a tally on your observation chart (use a different symbol for each behavior so that you will be able to distinguish them). Note the length of time it takes for the instructor to give a direction, in seconds, including the time that the direction behavior begins and ends. Note that you will be recording these data in five-minute intervals on the observation chart. Ignore all other behavior boxes on your observation chart.

Behavior Observation Chart

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2		Scenario 3		
Time in minutes	Gives Emphasis	Talks	Leaves Room	Says "uh'	Points to Students	Gives Directions
0-5						
6-10						
11-15						
16-20						
21-25						
26-30						
31-35						
36-40						
41-45						
46-50						
51-55						
56-60						
Break						

Tally and/or duration of behavior

Activity Sheet

Observing Behavior Activity Agenda (20 min.)

Activity	Time
1. Individually compute totals for your observations. Be sure to note the periods when each behavior occurred most and least frequently. Note any other patterns that you think are important.	4 min.
2. As a group summarize your individual observations. Did you get the same totals for the behaviors? Did you notice the same patterns for most and least frequent behaviors? Discuss any differences that you may have. Why do you think they occurred?	5 min.
3. As a group, form a report to the teacher based on the summary of your group's data. This should include similarities as well as differences in the data. This should also include any additional information you think would be important to share with a team who will be using your data to make decisions about a student's program.	10 min.
4. Elect or appoint a person to read the summary report to the class.	1min.

ABC Observation Data Sheet

Student ______________________________

EXACT TIME	A ANTECEDENT	B BEHAVIOR	C CONSEQUENCE

W. KEOGH, 1999

ABC Analysis for Jenni

Whenever Jenni cried and hit herself, many of the students would come over to her and speak nicely to her. The other students who may have wanted the toy she had always relinquished their request. They would find something else to play with. Often children would ask her what other types of things she might like and she would have more interesting toys to examine. But, when Jenni was quiet and not fussing, children would generally ignore her.

Unit 2 Forms

Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

- Knowledge Review
- Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary
- Unit Evaluation Form

Knowledge Review

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Name: ____

Date: ____

Site: ____

Instructor: ____

Directions: Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.

11. Descriptions of behavior are most useful when they:
    a) are observable
    b) indicate a cause for the behavior
    c) can be measured
    d) are subjective
    e) a and c only

12. Which of the following is an example of an "observable" behavior?
    a) Sally is upset that she received a "C" on her report card.
    b) Jake slams his books down on his desk whenever he arrives in math class.
    c) Henry's attitude about school gets him into trouble.
    d) Both Sam and Joshua are aggressive boys.

13. A telephone rings and you pick it up and say, "hello." If saying hello is a Behavior, then what would the Antecedent and Consequence be in an ABC Analysis?
    a) A would be the ring and C the voice on the other end.
    b) A would be the voice on the other end and C would be the phone ringing
    c) A is saying "hello" and C is the replacing of the receiver
    d) there is not enough information to tell.

14. Events that are not part of the ABC observation, that may not be readily apparent, but that contribute to the occurrence of a challenging behavior are termed:
    a) antecedents
    b) setting events
    c) consequences
    d) variables

15. Why do we gather information about what happens before and after a behavior?
    a) to develop a hunch about why the behavior occurs
    b) to document whether our interventions work
    c) to help us identify possible factors that contribute to or maintain the behavior
    d) a and c
    e) all of the above

16. A tally of the number of times a particular behavior happens is called a:
    a) scatter plot
    b) frequency count
    c) functional assessment
    d) sample

17. Which of the following explains the relationship between a student's environment and his or her behavior?
    a) The type of behavior always explain its function.
    b) Behavior is random and unpredictable.
    c) Behavior is related to the context in which it occurs and serves a function for the student.
    b) Challenging behavior is intentional and caused by factors outside of the school's control.

18. Functional assessment does which of the following?
    a) identifies what is wrong with a person
    b) compares a person's behaviors to a standardized norm
    c) examines relationships between behavior and the environment
    d) predicts which behaviors will eventually improve and which won't

19. Which of the following is considered to be a "disruptive behavior"? One that:
    a) is life threatening
    b) interferes with learning
    c) is of limited social acceptance
    d) is odd

20. A primary advantage of a scatter plot over a simple tally of behavior is that it:
    a) is easier to complete and score
    b) provides information about the frequency and the context of a behavior
    c) is more accurate
    d) is more reliable and valid

Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary

Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

☐

a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to identify a frequently occurring behavior (a behavior that happens more than once a day) of the student with behavior challenges who was chosen in the practicum requirement for Unit 1. The paraeducator will observe that behavior at least three times on the same day or over a period of time.

b) The observation should include three components: 1) a description of the chosen behavior; 2) a description of what happens **before** the behavior; 3) description of what happens **after** the behavior. The paraeducator will record the observation using the ABC Observation Data Sheet located in the Participant's Manual.

c) The paraeducator will summarize the observation data in a scatter plot format (refer to Foster-Johnson & Dunlap, 1993 reading located in the Participant's Manual for an example of a scatter plot). This will require observing a student for part of each day over a three-day period, and writing down how frequently the student engages in the behavior in each of at least three classes.

d) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss results from the observation using the observation sheet and the scatter plot. The discussion may include suggestions for ways to improve data collection, factors that may contribute to the behavior (including what happens before and after the behavior), and patterns noted in the scatter plot summary. They should also discuss the best way to collect and report information about the behavior of students. The cooperating teacher will mark a check in the box above to indicate that the paraeducator has completed this practicum requirement.

Unit 2 Evaluation Form
Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Participant name (optional): ____________________ Date: ________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   - ☐ very important
   - ☐ important
   - ☐ somewhat important
   - ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

4. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

5. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

6. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

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7. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

8. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

9. What was the most important or useful thing that you learned from this unit?

10. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Unit 3:

Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Participant's Overview

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Brief Description of the Unit

This unit provides information on ways to prevent challenging behaviors by addressing the psychological and academic needs of students. Paraeducators will become familiar with the components of a behavior support plan (i.e., prevention, teaching, and responding). Teaching alternative (or replacement) behaviors and social skills are also covered.

Hours of Instruction (In class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge, S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.)

1. Paraeducators will understand the components of a positive behavior support plan. (K)
2. Paraeducators will know factors that prevent challenging behaviors for students. (K)
3. Paraeducators will become familiar with the role of replacement behaviors as alternatives for challenging behaviors. (K)
4. Paraeducators will implement teacher-planned prevention strategies and support replacement behaviors (S).

Preparing For the Unit

Required Readings:

Ayres, B., & Hedeen, D. (1997). Creating positive behavior supports. In M.F. Giangreco (Ed.), *Quick guides to inclusion: Ideas for educating students with disabilities.* (pp. 113-139). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Backus, L. (2000*). Paraeducators' roles in preventing challenging behaviors and teaching replacement behavior*. (Unpublished manuscript.) Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Ruef, M. (1997). *Positive behavior support: Strategies for teachers* (pp. 10-28). Lawrence: University of Kansas, Beach Center on Families and Disability.

Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R., & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families to include students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education.* (pp. 57-79). Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Participant Preparation for Unit 3:

- Read the required readings **prior to the class.**
- Based on the required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class.
- Bring writing materials for note taking and activities to class.
- Review practicum requirements for Unit 3.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed is located at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher and approval by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles

Brendtro, L., & Brokenleg, M. (1993). Beyond the curriculum of control. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Problems, 1* (3), 5-11.

Faber, A., & Mazlish, E. (1982). *How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk.* New York: Avon Books.

Goldstein, A., Sprafkin, R., Gershaw, N.J., & Klein, P. (1980). *Skillstreaming the adolescent: A structured learning approach to teaching prosocial skills.* Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Janney, R., & Snell, M. (2000). *Behavioral support: Teachers' guides to inclusive practices.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Jones, V. & Jones, L. (1998). *Comprehensive classroom management: Creating communities of support and solving problems* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Kohn, A. (1995*). Beyond discipline: From compliance to community.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Mendler, A. (1992). *What do I do when? How to achieve discipline with dignity in the classroom.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Services.

Web Sites

Beach Center on Families and Disability, University of Kansas:
http://www.lsi.ukans.edu/beach/pbs/pbs.htm

Council for Exceptional Children:
http://www.cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

National Education Service:
http://www.nes.org

Videos

Bureau of Education & Research. (1999). *Making inclusion more successful: Practical behavior management strategies for the classroom.* Bellevue, WA: Author.

Committee for Children (1997). *Check it out.* To accompany *Second step: A violence prevention curriculum.* Seattle, WA: Author.

Curwin, R., & Mendler, A. (1997). *As tough as necessary: A discipline with dignity approach to countering aggression, hostility and violence.* Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

National Education Service. (1996*). Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future* [video series]. Bloomington, IN: Author.

Seeman, H. (1992). *Preventing classroom behavior problems.* New York: ProEducation Media.

Unit 3 Required Readings

Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

This Unit is divided into two primary sections: (a) preventing challenging behavior, and (b) teaching alternative behaviors to students. The readings provide information important to paraeducators who want to better understand how to prevent challenging behavior and effectively teach students new behaviors.

The first reading, by Backus (2000), provides background information about prevention strategies used in behavior support plans. The second reading, by Ayres and Hedeen (1997), provides a framework for general strategies for preventing behavior problems and offers examples of how to teach new positive skills and help students get a sense of control over their environment. Most of the Ayres and Hedeen reading is designed for teachers; however, it may include useful information for paraeducators. Strategies #3, 4, and 7 are particularly helpful for paraeducators. The next reading, "Identifying Student Supports" by Topper et al. (1994), is a more in-depth explanation of how prevention strategies are selected by a team, how to promote peer interaction and support, how to help students gain a sense of belonging and independence, and how to alter the classroom environment to prevent behavior problems and develop communication and instructional styles that might influence student behavior. Effective ways to avoid power struggles and to address misbehavior are included. We have also included a chapter from Topper et al. (1994) that explains how to teach replacement behaviors.

Last, the reading from the Beach Center on Families and Disability (1997) on positive behavior support strategies combines prevention and teaching strategies with other useful suggestions from teachers and provides some novel ideas for how to use positive behavior supports.

Most of these readings were written for teachers–specifically for people who work with students with challenging behaviors every day. Although teachers should have the primary responsibility for planning and selecting strategies, we feel it is important for paraeducators to understand how those decisions are made in order to be more effective in their role of providing support and assistance.

Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Linda Backus

Center on Disability and Community Inclusion
The University Affiliated Program of Vermont,
Burlington, Vermont (2000)

As a paraeducator, you work as part of a team to support students with disabilities. Some of those students may exhibit behaviors that are challenging or that interfere with learning. Collaborative teams are responsible not only for developing educational plans for students, but also for planning prevention and intervention procedures to address student behavior. In general, the special educator and/or educator designs behavior "support" plans for individual students, and you may be asked to assist in implementing parts of such a plan.

Behavior support plans document positive (i.e., not punitive) approaches for helping a student to use new, more acceptable ways of behaving (Topper et al., 1994). The concept of positive behavior support is based on the assumption that challenging behaviors are learned and that they communicate something. In other words, challenging behaviors have a function. Understanding the functions and finding alternative ways to address them are what changes behavior (Durand & Carr, 1991). Positive behavior supports help students to be self-directed rather than encouraging dependence on outside rewards or reinforcers. This can help students develop new behaviors and strengthen positive social behaviors. However, there is more to changing behavior than just responding to it. In the past, a great amount of focus was put on rewarding or punishing challenging behaviors. Positive behavior supports do not include punishment as a component. Rewards are sometimes used but only within the context of a clear plan that outlines prevention strategies, replacement behaviors, and effective responses.

A positive behavior support plan is one that includes strategies for:

- **preventing** challenging behaviors;
- **teaching** alternative (or replacement) behaviors; and
- **responding** in positive and effective ways to prevent the recurrence of challenging behaviors.

Some of the most effective prevention and intervention strategies that are found in positive behavior support for dealing with challenging behaviors plans include:

- increasing students' abilities to get their psychological and academic needs (e.g., for attention, mastery) met by increasing their control, choices, opportunities for attention, status, self-esteem, and use of strengths;

- altering the classroom conditions that trigger challenging behaviors, including seating, lighting, noise level, distractions, and other environmental factors, along with transitions and grouping;
- modifying instructional approaches and the curriculum to yield increased student success;
- interacting in ways that promote clarity and positive, effective communication;
- teaching, modeling, and reinforcing effective social behaviors and problem solving for students; and
- responding to misbehaviors in ways that are educational and respectful.

It is not surprising that effective instruction, effective classroom management, and strong teacher-student relationships go hand in hand to prevent many challenging behaviors.

In addition to preventive approaches, it is often necessary to help students learn more effective skills in how to get along with each other, how to work together, how to control their anger, and how to solve problems. Those skills can "replace" the ineffective ways students might be using to get their needs met. Such skills are often called "prosocial" skills or "replacement behaviors." An example of teaching a replacement behavior might be helping a student learn to count to 10 instead of shouting out when frustrated.

Teaching replacement behaviors to students can be very time consuming and difficult. There are many ways that paraeducators can help in this area. These include:

- helping to demonstrate and point out examples of targeted social skills,
- helping students practice their new skills, and
- finding opportunities throughout the day for students to use their new skills in different places.

These practices help students "generalize" the skills, which will make them really useful and more likely to be used by the student.

If you master some of the prevention strategies outlined in this section, teach replacement behaviors, learn effective ways to respond to misbehaviors and minimize crises, your job of working students with behavior challenges will be clearly more successful and rewarding.

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Durand, V.M., & Carr, E.G. (1991). Functional communication training to reduce challenging behavior: Maintenance and application. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis, 24,* 719-732.

Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R., & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families to include students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education*. Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Excerpts from: Ayers, B., & Hedeen, D. (1997). In M. F. Giangreco *Quick-Guides to inclusion: Ideas for educating students with disabilities.* Reprinted with permission.

Quick-Guide #5

Creating Positive Behavioral Supports

Barbara J. Ayres and Deborah L. Hedeen

Quick-Guides to Inclusion: Ideas for Educating Students with Disabilities

Michael F. Giangreco, Ph.D.
Series Editor

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Dear Teacher,

Have you ever used the phrase "I'm at my wits' end!" when referring to a student in your classroom? Is this a student who doesn't seem to pay attention to the rules, destroys the property of others, ignores others' personal space, talks back, and/or doesn't respond to the consequences that have been effective with other students over the years? While these are all difficult behaviors to address in the classroom, the solutions are often quite "low tech" and common sense, and they can be created by concerned adults and students working together.

The purpose of this Quick-Guide on creating positive behavioral supports in the inclusive classroom is to provide you with a number of guidelines that we feel you might find helpful as you work collaboratively with others to address behavioral issues presented by students. Each guideline includes a brief description and examples that help each point come to life. At the end of this Quick-Guide you will find a list of "Selected References" that you can refer to if you are interested in gaining additional information on any of the points presented. We hope the guidelines presented in this Quick-Guide will help you get started with creating positive behavioral supports for students who have difficult behaviors.

Good Luck!

Barb and Deb

GUIDELINES-AT-A-GLANCE

1. Get a Little Help from Your Friends
2. Establish Shared Expectations About the Student's Educational Program
3. Understand Your Posture or Attitude Toward the Student Who Has Difficult Behaviors
4. Consider the Message Behind the Behavior
5. Help the Student Feel a Sense of Control over the Classroom Environment
6. Share Information with the Student's Classmates
7. Focus on the Prevention of Problems
8. Teach New, Positive Skills that Will Help the Student Interact and Communicate
9. Respond in Positive, Supportive Ways When the Student Is Having Difficulty
10. Evaluate Your Teaching and Your Interactions with the Student

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Get a Little Help from Your Friends

Including a student who has difficult behaviors in the general education classroom is not an easy job. As a teacher, your attention needs to go to all of your students, not just one. It is sometimes hard to work alone to solve all of the problems that arise during a typical day! Teachers we have worked with have found it most effective to create a "problem-solving team" that works together to focus on the specific needs of the student. It is best if the members of the team know the student well and can spend some time in the classroom, or watch videotapes of classroom activities, so that everyone has a shared understanding of the issues you face as the classroom teacher. For example, in one school where we worked, the problem-solving team included the classroom teacher and classroom assistant, the child's mother, a speech-language therapist, and a special education consultant.

As a team, you can follow a problem-solving format to start the process of determining what the difficulties are, how you can prevent problems, what new skills need to be taught, and how you can respond in positive ways when problems do arise. Often, it is easier for people who are not directly involved on a day-to-day basis to provide new ideas or help you refocus your energy where it will be most beneficial.

It is also important to consider the child himself as a member of the problem-solving team, as well as classmates. Children can have incredible insights into issues and offer a very different, and often quite refreshing, perspective.

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Establish Shared Expectations About the Student's Educational Program

When using a team approach to problem solving, it is important that all members have a shared vision of the priority educational goals and objectives for the student. When working with a student who has difficult behaviors, it is easy to think of the things you wish the child would not do, yet it is important to determine the positive behaviors you want the child to learn. Goals and objectives for the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) should be centered around these positive behaviors versus what you want the student to stop doing.

Consider the following goal and objective taken from the IEP of a young girl and ask yourself if they communicate the new skills that the child should learn to replace the difficult behaviors:

Goal: To extinguish negative and/or aggressive behaviors toward self and others.

Objective: Refrain from hitting, kicking, or biting others by removal from group.

We hope your answer is "No." This goal and objective describe what the student should *stop* doing. A positive goal and objective might read as follows:

Goal: To increase ability to transition from one activity to another.

Objective: When given one reminder about the amount of time left before a transition and a picture of the next activity, the student will complete the activity she is engaged in and move to the next within 1 minute of the verbal cue.

When you and your team members have a clear idea of the positive educational needs of the child, and can articulate them in writing through the IEP, you will find that you are making progress toward developing a path you can follow to support a student.

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Understand Your Posture or Attitude Toward the Student Who Has Difficult Behaviors

At times, a student who has difficult behaviors will push us to our limits and bring out the worst in us! Although it is difficult to remain calm and supportive when a student is "pushing our buttons," it is exactly at that time when we must remain stable and continue to provide positive direction to the student.

There are four different "postures" or "attitudes" that guide how we react in times of crisis. First, we can be ***overprotective.*** A teacher with this attitude is communicating a message to the student that he can do whatever he would like and that there are no boundaries. Teachers who have this posture often say, "I just don't want to rock the boat." Second, we can be cold and ***mechanistic.*** With this attitude, the teacher just sticks to the established rewards and consequences and will not bend to accommodate a student and possibly prevent problems from occurring or getting worse. Third, we can have an ***authoritarian*** attitude. This is when the teacher is the "boss" and the student had better follow the rules or he will be in big trouble! A teacher with this attitude will often rely on negative consequences in an effort to shape a student's behavior. Fourth, we can have an attitude of ***respect, relationship, and solidarity*** with a student. With this attitude, the teacher communicates a message to the student that "we are in this together." This teacher is flexible and supportive and resolves conflict actively with the student by providing direction and positive support, even during a conflict situation. While we will find it difficult, if not impossible, to always remain calm and supportive, we should strive to develop this attitude as our classroom "umbrella."

Consider the Message Behind the Behavior

Although you might feel that the student in your classroom who has difficult behaviors is sometimes deliberately trying to "ruin your day," behaviors usually serve a more specific purpose for the child and make perfect sense to her. Some students have limited language or have learned to use behaviors to "make things happen" in their school or home environments or both. There are a number of different messages that are communicated through the use of behaviors.

First, the student may be using the behavior to tell you that she needs your attention. For example, if a child wants you to come to her right away, what might be the most effective approach—waiting quietly at the desk or pushing over the desk?! Second, a student might want to escape an activity because she is bored or finds it too difficult. If the student repeatedly pushes the materials off the desk, your current response might be to have her take a "time-out," which allows her to effectively get out of the task through the use of her behavior. Third, the behavior might serve a play function. The student might be thinking, "It just feels good to do this behavior, it is entertaining, and I can get a reaction from the adults in the classroom too!" Fourth, the child might use the behavior for self-regulation. That is, the behavior might help the student focus, slow down, or speed up (e.g., rocking, foot tapping).

The goal in identifying the communicative intent of the behavior is to identify alternative positive skills that can be taught to replace the behavior. So, the student who pulls hair or clothing in an effort to get the attention of classmates is actively taught to tap them on the shoulder to initiate an interaction.

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Help the Student Feel a Sense of Control over the Classroom Environment

All children strive to feel a sense of control in their lives. Sometimes the student who has difficult behaviors just goes about getting this control in ways that we find difficult to understand and accept. This is the student who wants what he wants, when he wants it—NOW! As teachers, our first response might be to get firm, restrict privileges, and try to show him who is the "boss." However, teachers who are most successful in working with students who have difficult behaviors have found that, although they need to provide some overall structure and establish clear boundaries and expectations, they can also provide many opportunities for students to feel a sense of control throughout their school day.

Developing this sense of control can be accomplished in a number of ways. First, it is very important to provide opportunities for students to make decisions and provide their input regarding the day's activities. For some students we need to create a balance between what they *have* to do and what they *want* to do by providing opportunities for choice making. This can be facilitated within activities (e.g., what materials) and between activities (e.g., what he wants to do now). Students can also choose with whom they want to engage in activities and where they would like to complete the activity. Second, a teacher can provide a specific schedule for a student so she will know the flow of activities for the day. A personal, concrete schedule is often best when the student puts her day together through words and/or pictures and crosses off activities once they are completed. Third, if activities can be made more concrete (e.g., visual, tactile), the student will often be more successful in remaining "on task." It is helpful when the task itself includes natural cues that signal completion. With some tasks that are less concrete, teachers will need to be creative by building cues into the task that signal when it is finished.

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Share Information with the Student's Classmates

When a student with difficult behaviors is educated in a general education classroom, peers will often observe and question the behavior of the student and the responses of the adults. It is important to recognize that classmates model the attitudes and behaviors of the adults in the setting. Although we have always been concerned with confidentiality of students receiving special education services, the fact that we do not say anything about a child's behavior does not mean that other students do not see it occurring. We feel it is important to talk honestly with classmates so they can begin to understand why the student is using certain behaviors.

A first-grade teacher we know talked to her students about what they thought their classmate might be trying to communicate to them when he got upset. One student said, "At the beginning of the year Sean's screams were just screams to us. But now, we can tell if they mean frustration, happiness, sadness, fright, or if he just wants us to leave him alone. Sometimes we have to change some activities so he can participate. But, however he lives, or however he talks to us, he is still one of us."

Another teacher discussed similarities and differences that exist among all people and had the students identify these qualities in themselves. He then read stories about students with disabilities. One day when the student with difficult behaviors was out of the classroom, the teacher facilitated a discussion about how they could tell when he was becoming upset and what they could do to redirect his attention to something else in an effort to prevent problems from occurring. The students generated a list of ideas and picked two they would try during the next few weeks. Students are much more supportive of their classmates when they are given accurate information and an invitation to problem-solve with adults.

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Focus on the Prevention of Problems

The most effective way to deal with difficult behaviors is to prevent them from ever occurring. The key to prevention is prediction. If you can predict with some degree of accuracy when a challenging behavior is most and least likely to occur, and why, you will be more likely to create environmental changes that will minimize the likelihood of occurrence.

There are at least three ways to think about environmental changes in your classroom. First, you can think about changing the **physical environment.** For example, each morning Jane walked by the teacher's desk and knocked her pencil container and books off onto the floor. So, the teacher created an alternate walking route so Jane no longer passed by her desk.

Second, you can adapt the ***instructional environment*** by changing the amount of work you are requiring from the student or by using different materials. Asking questions like, "Is this work too hard, or too easy?" can help you make necessary modifications that will allow the student to be successful.

Third, the ***social environment*** involves changing how and when people interact with each other. In one classroom, students were asked to sit next to their partners to complete an assignment. One student would hit her partner in order to get his attention. Placing the student across from her partner encouraged the student to use her voice to get his attention. There are many ways to change the environment so that students will be more successful.

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Teach New, Positive Skills that Will Help the Student Interact and Communicate

Many successful teachers work to prevent problems while actively teaching new skills. For some students, the inability to effectively communicate their thoughts or feelings will cause them to use other forms of behavior in order to get their needs met. These behaviors may include hitting, swearing, throwing objects, or refusing to participate. The reason students use these behaviors is because they are often effective ways to accomplish their goals. So, our job is to teach new, more acceptable ways to communicate the same message.

You will want to ask yourself, "How can I teach the student to communicate in a more positive way instead of using the behavior?" Once you select an alternative skill for the student to learn, then that is the skill to teach. For example, one student often pinched the teacher during reading group. The student had learned that "If I pinch, the teacher will remove me from the group and I will not have to work." Once the teacher realized that the student did not know another way to ask to leave the group, she decided to actively teach this new skill by presenting a card that said "break" and assisting him to point to it and take a short break at regular intervals during reading group.

The student may not respond immediately to your new teaching strategies. Continuous modeling and active teaching of new skills will show the student that there are more effective ways to communicate and interact with others. Your positive interactions with the student will encourage successful participation over time.

Respond in Positive, Supportive Ways When the Student Is Having Difficulty

Do you find yourself asking, "But what should I do when she...?" Although it is tempting to spend your time trying to figure out what to do after a behavior has occurred, we believe it is through prevention and teaching that you can most effectively create change in a student's behavior.

However, there will be times when a student will display behaviors that you cannot prevent. It will be important that you support the student during the difficult times so that no one is harmed and the environment is restored while allowing all participants to maintain a reasonable degree of dignity. Discussing or addressing the student's behavior while everyone is frustrated and exhausted is usually not the best solution.

An alternative idea is to think of quick, creative ways to engage the student in the activity at hand so that you can continue teaching. If the student has chosen to go to a different place in the room, then take the materials to the student so that he can continue working. If the student is refusing to work, then provide some choices so that he can select one thing to do. If the student is starting to tire, then let the student know how much work is left before taking a break.

There is an element of give and take—of negotiation—in helping to solve a challenging situation. It is not merely an attempt to control another person, but rather to understand and reach a mutually acceptable solution.

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Evaluate Your Teaching and Your Interactions with the Student

Creating positive behavioral supports is an ongoing process that requires constant attention and reevaluation. Although we used to take a more simplistic view of behavior change, we now recognize that it is a complex process that requires concentrated effort by a team of people over time. By developing behavioral support plans that address prevention, teaching, and responding, we are initially making our "best guess" as to what might be effective. These best guesses will need to be refined as we learn more about the student and the purpose of his behavior.

One tool that can be extremely effective in the evaluation process is the use of videotapes of the student in the classroom. By capturing segments of the student's day on videotape, you can assess the areas that have been described in this Quick-Guide, such as your posture or attitude toward the student, the message behind the behavior, prevention strategies, new skills that need to be addressed, and responding to the student in positive, supportive ways. Asking others to view and critique the videotaped footage with you is an excellent way to get feedback and direction.

In the absence of videotape equipment, requesting that team members observe within the classroom during difficult times, and during successful times, will help you gather necessary information that will allow you to modify your plans.

You and your team members must recognize and value the ongoing process of evaluation and be willing to reconsider your intervention support plan to make the necessary changes that will allow the student, and the adults, to achieve success.

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Chapter 5

Identify Student Supports

Once the situations which trigger challenging behaviors and the purposes of the behaviors have been identified, planning teams can focus on brainstorming supports to prevent them. Support strategies are pro-active not reactive, and active not passive. They either minimize contact with people, places, activities or times that appear to precede the behaviors or change the situations. Preventing challenging behaviors from occurring is more effective then primarily focusing on how to respond after they occur because prevention strategies set-up both the student *and* teachers for success.

Are There Guidelines for Selecting Support Strategies?

Four general guidelines for selecting support strategies are:

1. Encourage students to have ownership and responsibility for making the strategies work through listening to them, involving them in brainstorming their support needs, and supporting them to approve and disapprove strategies;
2. Consider the functions of the challenging behaviors (i.e., attention, escape/avoidance, control/to get something, revenge, self-regulation and play) when selecting support strategies. Figure 5.1 provides information on positive aspects of the behaviors and Figure 5.2 provides considerations for developing a student support plan based upon the function of the behaviors;
3. Provide too much support rather than not enough; and
4. Initially make participation errorless by preventing problems from occurring until the student has mastered coping skills for dealing with these situations.

The factors which contribute to students presenting challenging behaviors are complex and a wide array of prevention options must be considered and used. In developing support plans teams should, at the minimum, consider options which:

- Increase student control and choices;
- Increase opportunities for positive attention;

Figure 5.1

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF BEHAVIOR

Attention - Student is interested in relationships with adults and peers. Student is asking for attention. Attention can be used to motivate positive behavior.

Control - Student exhibits leadership potential, assertiveness and independent thinking.

Revenge - Student shows a spark of life. May be trying to protect self from further hurt.

Escape / Avoidance - Student may want to succeed if he can be sure of not making mistakes and of achieving some status. For some severely discouraged students, there are few positives.

Self -Regulation - Behaviors may work to reduce anxiety.

Play - Student enjoys life. Is able to amuse himself. Wants friends.

Figure 5.2

CATEGORIES OF SUPPORTS WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR EACH COMMUNICATION OF BEHAVIOR

Attention / Control / Revenge

- Increase the student's personal control and choices.
- Increase opportunities for positive attention and friendships.
- Increase the student's status, self esteem, image.

Escape/Avoidance / Play

- Increase the student's personal control and choices.
- Increase the student's status, self esteem, image.
- Match teaching strategies to student strengths and interests.
- Match instructional activities and materials to student strengths and interests.
- Match expected responses/testing methods to student strengths and interests.

Self-Regulation

- Increase the student's personal control and choices.
- Match teaching strategies to student strengths and interests.
- Match instructional activities and materials to student strengths and interests.
- Match expected responses/testing methods to student strengths and interests.

- Increase student's status, self-esteem, image;
- Match teaching strategies to student strengths;
- Match instructional activities to student strengths;
- Match expected responses/testing methods to student strengths; and
- Match physical arrangement and classroom management to student strengths.

In Figure 5.3 we have listed support strategies for each of the above options. The intent was not to present an exhaustive list, but to assist teams in generating ideas.

Reflection Questions

1. Using the student identified for the previous reflection question review Figure 5.3, Support Strategies for Preventing Challenging Behavior, and select strategies which would help support the student.
2. Do you think that most of the strategies on the Support Strategies List will help support most students?

Developing support strategies should include efforts by the team to ensure that the student's quality of life is at least as good as the typical life circumstances of a student their same age. For example, Allison's support plan included ways to avoid situations that precede hitting others but it also addressed the fact that she is lonely and needs friends. The support strategies implemented by Allison's team included efforts to improve her social status and enable her to develop friendships.

Figure 5.3

SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

Increase Student Control and Choices

- Ask students what they need to have a better experience at school.
- Include students in planning and problem solving.
- Increase the number, variety and importance of the decisions students make.
- Support students having flexibility in their daily schedules.
- Support students shortening the length of an activity or taking mini-breaks.
- Grant students legitimate power — involve students in leadership roles.
- Support students to transition to the next class/activity at a different time.
- Add interesting activities and experiences matched to students' individual needs.
- Support students to self-evaluate their work.
- Support students to choose between various assignments or choose what part of an assignment to do.
- Support students to leave class when needed.
- Support students to choose testing methods.
- Develop assignments which emphasize students' choices, strengths and talents.

Increase Opportunities for Positive Attention

- Assign students to teacher advisor/mentors.
- Increase the number of friends or allies who know and spend time with students.
- Encourage other students to include the student in activities (e.g., develop a "Circle of Friends").
- Engage family, friends, faculty, students in supporting the students (e.g., implement a MAPS activity).
- Identify an adult mentor within the community.
- Increase the number of community activities students have access to.
- Support students to join after school groups/clubs/teams.
- Increase others' knowledge of students' interests strengths and preferences.
- Use teaching assistants to help all students in the class rather than an assistant paired directly with one student.
- Speak and react to students in ways that model respect and friendship.
- Develop a peer buddy systems for students.

Figure 5.3 Continued

Increase Student's Status, Self-Esteem, Image

- Support students to be peer mentors/tutors.
- Support student involvement in community service activities.
- Give students assignments which will "guarantee" success.
- Support students to obtain a job.
- Add prosocial skills to students' curricula.
- Support students to access high status materials, clothing accessories (in style for age group and community).
- If any characteristics of the students' life reinforce a negative reputation, try to decrease the stigma students experience.
- Give students high status classroom/school jobs/roles.
- Increase amount of time students spend in roles that offer the best opportunities to express their natural abilities or strong interests (e.g., drawing, music, drama, pottery, sports, reading, math).

Match Teaching Strategies /Arrangements to Meet the Student's Strengths

- Increase the use of hands on, small group, (3 to 6 students) teacher directed and student directed activities and decrease/limit large group (e.g., lecture format) activities.
- Increase the use of Cooperative Learning Group Activities.
- Provide students instruction & frequent feedback on how to work in a group.
- Select instructional group in advance and rearrange groupings often to insure good matches among students.
- Decrease the length of activities.
- Increase the use of activities in which students work independently.
- Increase the use of peer partner/tutoring teaching formats.
- Gain student attention prior to giving directions.
- Provide students with written notes/audio tapes of lectures and written directions.
- Increase the use of a questioning/discussion format.
- Increase repeating/rewording questions and answers.
- Insure that students know when activities will be finished and how much time they have between activities.
- Increase use of comprehension checks before going on to new topic.
- Increase use of teacher demonstration/modeling.

Figure 5.3 Continued

- Increase use of role playing, coaching and feedback.
- Increase opportunities for students to use computers.
- Increase the fun level of activities (e.g., use games, hands on activities, cartoons, humor).

Match Instructional Activities and Materials to Student Strengths

- Tailor materials to match students' abilities and interests.
- Increase use of "hands on" activities.
- Increase use of "real life" examples matched to student age and interests.
- Use materials and activities that students commonly have access to in home and community environments.
- Use a variety of materials and activities to teach important concepts.
- Start at a point where you know students will be successful and work from there.
- Provide a variety of books/articles/materials for each lesson and allow students to select a few.
- Emphasize cooperation among students and sharing of materials.
- Limit competition among students.
- Increase opportunities for problem solving.
- Provide students with pre-training on materials (e.g., content, vocabulary).
- Be predictable — establish a visual schedule for the class as a whole and for individual students (like a date book).

Match Expected Responses / Testing Methods to Student Strengths

- Support students to communicate ideas and demonstrate learning in a variety of ways (art, music, dance, poetry, oral presentations).
- Avoid requiring students to respond in ways which are likely to produce extreme stress or anxiety (e.g., read aloud for a non-reader, essay exam for a poor writer).
- When anxiety producing situations (e.g., oral presentation, final exams) cannot be avoided, provide additional support tailored to the students' needs.
- Provide extra practice in non-threatening, supportive situations.
- Read the test to students.
- Test students in private.

Figure 5.3 Continued

- Give students extra time to answer/complete tests.
- Test students on a subset of the material.
- Break the test into shorter segments given over a period of days.

Physical Arrangement and Classroom Management

- Sit students in a position in the classroom which will best meet their needs (e.g., near the front of the classroom, near the teacher, near the door, near a window, near a supportive peer, away from unsupportive peers).
- Arrange classroom to prevent problems from occurring, facilitate cooperative interactions, and the sharing of materials and ideas between students and adults.
- Support students to leave the classroom (e.g., on a mission to the office, run an errand, go to see the guidance counselor) when anxious, angry, or fearful.
- Limit the student access to peers or adults who tend to set them off.
- Model appropriate ways of interacting with students for peers and other adults.
- Make sure all materials are handy and set up in advance.
- Reassess classroom rules in relation to the students' strengths and needs.
- Reassess classroom discipline methods in relation to the students' strengths and needs.

How Can We Facilitate Students Supporting Each Other?

It cannot be assumed that students will be able to establish and maintain friendships on their own. Being physically present and having frequent social contact does not necessarily lead to mutually rewarding friendships. Schaffner and Buswell[10] list some helpful strategies for developing friendships gleaned from their work with students, families and teachers. They suggest that we:

- Present students in the most positive light;
- Watch the students to identify budding relationships and then encourage them;
- Model respect, understanding and interest in all students;
- Structure activities in which students feel free to talk about their feelings and relationships;
- Help build a support group for the student, such as a "Circle of Friends" (e.g., a network that allows for the genuine involvement of classmates in

a caring and supportive friendship with the student with challenging behaviors);

- Use cooperative learning groups for class activities; and
- Advocate for the inclusion of the student in extra-curricular clubs and high-status activities.

Are There Specific Approaches for Developing Friendships and Support?

What would make you happier? *"Happier? If I had more friends who cared about me. No matter what I do or how I act."*

Two approaches for developing friendships and support are "Circle of Friends"[11] and MAPS[12] (McGill Action Planning System).

What is a "Circle of Friends"?

Students with challenging behaviors often find themselves isolated and alone. They may have lots of contact with caring service providers but it's not the same as having a friend. Students know the difference between trying to fit in and belonging. As educators, we have a tendency to focus on academic accommodations, skill development and behavior interventions. We pay little attention to the one thing students say they need the most. They need *friends* and they need to feel like they *belong*.

Snow and Forest have developed a process called "Circles of Friends" to help students build relationships with their classmates. This process is an activity that is done with a teacher or facilitator and the student's classmates. It helps to familiarize the student's classmates with how the student with challenging behavior feels, and what her life is like in relation to their own. In addition it helps the teacher or facilitator identify classmates who would be most willing to spend time with the student. This process is strictly voluntary, and classmates do not earn credits for being a friend. Hopefully the outcome of this process is development of genuine caring and supportive friendships between the student and their classmates.

How do we get started?

Start by drawing four concentric circles on a black board or large piece of paper for the students to see. A typical script (adapted from Snow & Forrest) one may use with the student's classmates goes as follows:

1. Hi, we are going to talk today about *(student)* who is going to be a student in your class (is a student in your class).
2. To tell you the truth, we can all feel a little scared sometimes when someone new comes to the class (when someone different is in the class). Why do you think ______________ may be scared?

Have the students discuss reasons for being scared

3. I want to take a few minutes to do an activity with you called circle of friends. There are four circles. On each circle you are to list people you know. The first, small, inner circle is for you to write your family and closest friends. (Teacher/facilitator fills in her circle on large paper).
4. Would some of you like to share who you put in your inner circle? (If no response, the teacher can share her first circle).
5. Okay, the second circle (the one bordering the inner circle) is for your friends, they are good friends yet you wouldn't put them in your inner circle number.
6. Share circle number two.
7. The third circle is for acquaintances. These are people you spend some time with like in scouting, soccer, club, or kids on your street.
8. Share circle number three.
9. In our fourth circle (the outer circle) we put people you or your parents pay to be in your lives, like the person who cuts your hair or your doctor.
10. Share circles.
11. Now I want you to think of an imaginary student named Rudi. She's your age and her circles look like this; she has her mom in circle number 1 and circles 2 and 3 are empty. Circle number 4 is filled with two respite workers, one therapist, one social worker and a doctor. How would you feel if your circle looked like Rudy's?

Have the student's talk about how they would feel

12. How can we make sure that _________'s circle doesn't look like Rudi's? (Let class brainstorm ideas). Who would like to be in ______________'s circle of friends?
13. Now remember that being friends isn't always easy and sometimes it can be really hard. Not all of you will be ______________'s friend yet each of you can do your best to be friendly with _____________.

Once a circle has been established for a student, it is important for the circle to meet on a regular basis as a circle team (i.e., have lunch together, meet before/after school or meet together outside during recess at a private spot). The teacher can help problem solve activities for the students to do together and process any issues that come up for the group. It doesn't blossom over night and may take some time for students to truly become friends and require less assistance through structured meetings.

What is MAPS?

The MAPS[13] process is a method of planning that is very individualized and strength based. This process is an approach to help teams think about who students are, where they want to go, what they are good at, and what they need. It helps to generate ideas for supporting students to belong.

The MAPS process typically involves the student support team and the student's friends. Together they address seven key questions. For each question, individuals take turns answering until all possible avenues of the question have been exhausted. The end result is a "snap-shot" of students and strategies for supporting their needs. The questions include:

1. What is the student's history? (e.g., key milestones in the student's life, past educational experiences, etc.)
2. What is your dream for this student? (e.g., type of classes, what she will do after graduation, job, marriage, kids, etc.)
3. What is your worst nightmare for the student? (e.g., this presents a worst case scenario that the team can work to prevent.)
4. Who is this student? (e.g., brainstorm words to describe the student, once the list is completed, three words are chosen that best describe the student.)
5. What are the student's strengths, gifts and talents? (e.g., good with hands, funny, likes to read, understanding, street smart, etc.)
6. What are the student's needs? (e.g., emotional needs, physical needs, social needs, academic needs, etc.)
7. What would this student's ideal day at school look like? What do we need to do to make this happen? (e.g., generate a plan for supports and accommodations needed to help this student go through a typical day).

After a team has developed a MAP for the student, they need to start on their journey. Just like any other map, sometimes we don't see the hidden turns or anticipate the sudden changes in the pavement. Continue to persevere and together you will find your way.

Can the Way in Which the Teacher Communicates with Students Provide Support?

Yes. The way in which a teacher communicates with students can avoid or provoke conflict. Three forms of interaction that can prevent conflict from occurring and can help de-escalate it after it has occurred are the use of *I-Messages, Interpretive Feedback,* and *Quiet-Messages.*

What are *I-Messages?*

I-Messages enable teachers to communicate how they feel about a specific situation without placing the blame on the students. The intent of a simple, straightforward *I-Message* is not to tell another person what do, but to communicate the impact of their actions.

You-Messages do the opposite of the *I-Messages. You-Messages* assign blame to the person. This type of communication tends to order, preach and command students. In addition, this type of message may lead to ridicule and shame, provoking a student to become defensive, withdrawn, or escalate the intensity of the episode.

Typical *I-Messages*	Typical *You-Messages*
I feel angry when...	You stop that...
When students talk during class I...	You should know better.
What can I do about this?	You are bugging me.
It makes me feel good when...	You sit down.

What is *Interpretive Feedback*?

Interpretive Feedback involves addressing what people are feeling as well as what they are saying. Use of *Interpretive Feedback* communicates that you care about the person and how they feel. Often acknowledging and talking about the feelings can avoid or defuse potentially troublesome situations.

In order to use *Interpretive Feedback* you must first determine how the person is feeling (e.g., angry, afraid, anxious, frustrated) based on their tone of voice, body language and the context of the situation. Next, acknowledge the feeling (e.g., "Mary, it seems that you are frustrated") and indicate that you understand why they feel that way (e.g., "Division problems can be very trying. Following all the steps and writing down the numbers in the right place can be a very hard thing to do"). If you are not sure how a person is feeling, venture a guess (e.g., "You seem angry") and ask questions to enable the student to process the situation (e.g., "Did something bad happen to you this morning").

What are *Quiet-Messages*?

Quiet-Messages are ways to communicate with students without publicly singling them out for such things as mistakes, rule violations, and inappropriate behavior. No one likes to be singled out for such transgressions. For example, at a teachers' meeting your supervisor tells you to put your gum away or reprimands you for not completing a committee assignment. In the packed teachers' lounge your supervisor asks for an explanation of why you have been 10 minutes late for work every day for the past week. How would you feel? Would you feel embarrassed, angry, that a trust with your supervisor had been violated, that your supervisor was disrespectful and ignoring your need for privacy? How would you prefer that the supervisor communicate with you?

Students have similar reactions to being publicly singled out for transgressions. However, we often observe students being singled out. Blatant examples include writing students' names on the board for misbehaving and posting student grades along side their names. Less blatant examples include telling students, in front of the whole class, to get to work, to take the gum out of their mouths, or the consequences for not completing her homework. Some ways to avoid singling students for transgressions include:

- Take the student aside for a private conference;
- Use verbal reminders which do not single out a particular student such as, reminding the whole class about their homework, asking the student if she needs help rather then singling her out for being off task, reminding the whole class about gum chewing rule; and
- Use nonverbal cues such as pointing to your mouth to remind the student about gum chewing, point towards the student's work to remind her of what she is supposed to be doing, hand the student an object related to the activity you want them to do, use a questioning body posture and facial express to ask the student if she intends to do her homework.

Refining communication skills is complicated due to the patterns of interacting we have established over the years. Using new communication skills is further complicated by the emotional intensity that accompanies challenging interactions. Be kind, realistic and understanding when self-evaluating how quickly you can change your interaction skills and types of support you need to make the change.

Exercise

1. Generate a list of *You-Messages* and then rewrite them as *I-Messages.*
2. Practice using *I-Messages* with your spouse and children.
3. Think of examples when you or someone else has used *Interpretive Feedback.*
4. Practice using *Interpretive Feedback* with your spouse and children.
5. Think of examples when you or someone else have used *Quiet-Messages.*
6. Practice using *Quiet-Messages* with your spouse and children.

Are There Teaching Styles Which Support Preventing Challenging Behavior?

Frequently when teams discuss how to prevent challenging behavior, we hear, "We need to set limits." However, the effect created by setting limits is dramatically influenced by a person's individual *teaching style.* The term *teaching style* refers to the set of attitudes and beliefs that define and direct how a teacher acts. There are at least four *teaching styles* that influence how adults support students; permissive, authoritarian, apathetic and democratic. Most teachers will employ a mixture of styles, however they will tend to use one style more often. A teaching style which is predominantly democratic is usually the most effective in addressing challenging behavior.

Permissive. This style provides total freedom for the student. The adult tends to be overprotective and there are few if any guidelines. The adult expresses a desire to care but there is a lack of clear expectations. The adult wants to maintain the status quo, avoids conflict by giving in, and generally tries to "win" the student's approval. When teachers or family members use this style, group members tend to take advantage of each other. Students who are responded to in this style often have difficulty dealing with rules and regulations.

Authoritarian. This style allows for no freedom on the part of the student. Control of the difficult behavior is gained through the use of rigid rules and punitive and/or reinforcing consequences. With this style the powerful govern the powerless and the student learns to be dependent on the teacher for control. For example, when the teacher is not present, the student has a tendency to resist being controlled and "acts out." In addition, the student expects "pay" for cooperation and if there is no follow-through the student becomes increasingly resentful and seeks revenge. The authoritarian style also models dominating others as the way to solve problems.

Apathetic. This style allows for the adult to avoid attachment and ownership of students. The adult tends to use guidelines for controlling behavior with little concern for their effectiveness with individual students. The adult steps back and watches as students experience failure without any support. The effect of this non-interactive style is that students can perceive the adult as cold/distancing/detached. This usually results in the student seeking trust and belonging from someone else.

Democratic. This style allows for the student to experience freedom within limits. This style is based on a desire to give and receive affection, a need for fairness and a desire to empower. There is an emphasis on unconditional acceptance of the student and mutual respect. In addition, a democratic style of setting limits for behavior permits choice but requires accountability. The teacher controls situations by defining *the parameters of what is acceptable,* not students. *This style enables students to learn how to make decisions. Sharing decision making enables all parties to get their needs met and feel ownership of the plan. The resulting relationship is based on friendship, growth and a focus on interdependence.*

How Does a Teacher Who Uses a Democratic Teaching Style Respond to Challenging Behavior?

One type of response strategy that supports a democratic teaching style is logical consequences. Logical consequences involves the teacher negotiating with students to identify a logical consequence *before* a situation arises. For example, if students continues to play a game during reading period, then the students do their reading while other students have free time; or if students hit a peer, they might apologize *and* make it up to the person by doing a favor. Some characteristics of logical consequences include:

- The dignity of all those involved is the first consideration;
- The consequence should "makes sense" and be logically connected to the student's behavior;
- The consequence teaches the student what to do the next time a similar situation occurs;
- Teachers respond only to the present situation, not a build up of past events;
- Teachers are respectful and follow through; and
- The consequences permit choice and stress accountability for both students and teachers.

Reflection Questions

1. If you were a student, what teaching style would you find most supportive? Why?
2. Which style best describes your style?
3. Should teachers be asked to change their predominate teaching style to more effectively support students?
4. What supports should teachers be given in evaluating and changing their styles?

Working together the team should be able to provide support to enhance the student's overall quality of life and to prevent problems from occurring. The next step is for the team to identify what replacement behaviors to teach and how to teach them.

Chapter 6

Select and Teach Replacement Behavior

What are Replacement Behaviors?

In Chapter 5, we discussed support strategies to prevent problems from occurring by minimizing the student's exposure to stressful or provocative events. However, it is generally not possible for a student to completely avoid stressful situations. Thus, the student needs to learn appropriate ways to cope with stressful situations. To illustrate, here are some examples of replacement behavior:

- Allison learned to ask for a hug from her teachers and peers instead of roughhousing with them whenever she needed attention.
- Joseph learned to take a "pass" from the teacher's desk and go visit another adult (principle, nurse, janitor) whenever he felt anxious. The pass is signed by his teacher and the other supportive adult to insure accountability.
- Malcolm learned to ask for help from a peer partner when he felt he couldn't do a problem.

What are Some Guidelines for Selecting Replacement Behavior?

Replacement behaviors should always be selected through student, family and educators input and practiced with all people involved. Remember that students are engaging in challenging behavior to meet specific needs (e.g., to get attention, relieve anxiety, avoid a difficult task) and that challenging behavior may be the best way they have for meeting these needs. If our goal is to teach students other ways to effectively meet their needs, then we must select replacement behaviors that can serve the same purpose as the challenging behavior.

When selecting replacement behaviors, the team should address the following questions:

Will the replacement behavior ...

...work as well as the problem behavior in meeting students' needs?

...be an acceptable alternative to the problem behavior?

...be something that students choose to do and their families and teachers support?

...help build a positive reputation for students?

A replacement behavior can be a new behavior or a behavior the student already performs (but does not use on a regular basis). For example, Allison knew how to ask for a hug but she did not ask for one consistently. By encouraging and rewarding Allison to ask for a hug, Allison's teachers were able to teach an acceptable alternative to hitting. Whereas with Joseph, the team introduced a new way of coping. They taught Joseph to pick up a pass from the teacher's desk and leave the room when he felt anxious.

What are Some Strategies for Teaching Replacement Behavior?

There are a number of strategies for teaching replacement behavior. Once your team chooses a replacement behavior, consider the following tips and ideas for teaching it.

- Identify what the student has learned during the past year and find out what teaching strategies and assistance were most effective.
- In the beginning, practice the new behavior when the student is calm, relaxed and at times when problems do not occur.
- Provide multiple opportunities for the student to role-play and practice using the new behavior (i.e., in different classes, recess, home).
- In addition to teaching the student *how* to perform the new behavior, teach *when* to use it.
- To teach the student to self-initiate performing the skill, use such procedures as role playing and practice with feedback in the natural environment. Teach the student to recognize the specific situational and internal cues (e.g., student feels his heart pounding just before his turn to read aloud) that naturally happen before the behavior should occur. Overall, minimize the use of teacher-related cues because they foster dependency on the teacher.
- Try to anticipate when the student is about to make a mistake (experience difficulty when initially learning a new coping skill) and provide support to insure success, *but* allow enough time for the student to self-initiate participating. Ask the student what they want you to *do* (nonverbal cues) or *say* (verbal cues) to cue them to practice the new skill.
- Recognize that we all need different levels of support at different times. Be willing to increase or decrease the level of support based on the moment-to-moment needs of the student.

Teams should summarize what replacement behaviors they choose, how the replacement behaviors meets the student's needs (how it is directly related to the communication of the student's behavior), and how they will be taught. All components become part of the student's support plan.

Reflection Question

- Using the student identified for the previous reflectionquestions select replacement behavior(s) for the challenging behavior.

Are There Other Skills Which Should Be Addressed?

In addition to teaching replacement behaviors which specifically address the communication of students' challenging behaviors, teams may identify other skills to teach which enhance students' abilities to cope with difficult situations. Skills that enhance students' abilities to cope and survive in the classroom are often referred to as prosocial skills. In general students should learn how to use problem-focused coping skills to change situations that are controllable and emotion-focused coping skills to manage negative emotions when they have little or no control over a stressful situation. As depicted in Figure 6.1, some specific prosocial skills to consider teaching students are: 1) non-verbal communication/ body language, 2) social relationships, 3) self-management, and 4) study skills. Often such skill areas are not formally covered within the school's curriculum, yet they are skills that benefit all students. Select skill areas based on students' needs and preferences. Always explain to students how a particular skill is directly related to enhancing their ability to cope with difficult situations and involve them in selecting the skills to be taught.

Example strategies for teaching prosocial skills

- Read and discuss with the class stories about social situations (e.g., teasing) and how to respond to them.
- Provide opportunities for students to serve as peer sponsors with responsibility for supporting other, usually younger students, in responding appropriately to challenging social situations.
- Provide opportunities for students to write/tell/draw/act out stories about responding to challenging social situations (i.e., bullying, scape goating) based upon their observations and to read/discuss them with the class.
- Invite small groups of students to lunch chats about challenging social situations on a frequent basis.
- Ask students to keep a journal about resolving conflicts. Begin with a starter story about a difficult time and how you resolved it. Encourage students to write/tell and discuss their own experiences. Provide them with starter phases such as, "I find it hard to..." or "I had a hard time when...."

Figure 6.1

EXAMPLE OF ADDITIONAL SKILL AREAS TO BE TAUGHT

Non-Verbal Communication/Body Language

Skill Areas: show preferences, indicate rejection/protest through head shake and facial expressions, indicate acceptance through head nod and facial expressions, makes eye contact, use appropriate facial expressions, use appropriate body postures, use welcoming gestures, keep interpersonal distance, maintain physical appearance, limit physical contact.

Social Relationships

Skill Areas: introduce yourself, introduce other people, begin a conversation, end a conversation, join in, play a game, ask a favor, participate in turn taking, participation, offer assistance, salutations, ask a question, give a compliment, take a compliment, cooperate, share, apologize, negotiate, stand up for rights, treat others with respect, follow rules/social routines, act appropriately towards opposite sex, accept no, say no, ask permission.

Self Management

Skill Areas: know feelings, express feelings, recognize another's feelings, express concern for another, express affection, deal with anger, deal with another's anger, deal with fear, use self control, respond to teasing, deal with losing, deal with failure, avoid trouble, stay out of fights, accept consequences, deal with group pressure, deal with contradictory messages, relax, be honest, set goals, make decisions, solve problems, follow personal schedule, create schedule.

Study Skills

Skill Areas: listen, ask for help, ask questions, work/study habits, bring materials to class, follow instructions, take notes, organize materials/assignments, time management, complete assignments, ignore distractions, set goals, make choices, come to class on time, work in small groups (student directed), work in cooperative groups, work independently, tutor others, accept tutoring, use computers, follow classroom rules.

- Ask students to write/tell about their feelings. Begin with a starter story about situations which made you happy, lonely, mad, etc. Encourage students to write and discuss their own experiences. Provide them with starter phases such as, "I am happiest when..." or "I am loneliest when...."
- Use discussions, modeling, role playing and practice with feedback to teach substituting positive self-talk for negative self-talk. Encourage students to practice the skill in natural situations.
- Use discussions, modeling, role playing and practice with feedback to teach a consistent conflict management approach. Encourage students to practice the skill in natural situations.
- Use discussions, modeling, role playing and practice with feedback to teach "safety behavior" (e.g., responding to harassment). Encourage students to practice the skill in natural situations.
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in self-advocacy or self-help groups. Establish a "think tank" to help students solve problems.
- Acknowledge the feelings of students under stress and encourage students to talk about them.
- Assist students to identify the causes of major stress and strategies to reduce the stress (e.g., drop a class, get tutoring, change a teacher, leave the room to calm down).
- Have students be on "mediation" committees to learn conflict resolution skills and serve as a playground "mediator".
- Support students to leave activities causing major stress until they calm down (e.g., establish hand signals students use to indicate they are leaving and/or that you use to cue students to leave).
- Assist students to assess the rationality of their beliefs about how others are thinking about or acting towards them. For example, after an activity identify interactions such as a student laughing, a student asking clarification questions of another student, a student offering to help another student, and a student disagreeing with another's response. Ask students to individually identify why the student was laughing, etc. Next have students ask the target student "Why were you laughing?" Support students to compare their beliefs with the beliefs of other students and the student who performed the behavior in question.

Reflection Question

- Using the student identified for the previous reflectionquestions select additional prosocial skills to teach the student for coping with difficult situations.

Are There Specific Approaches for Teaching Prosocial Skills?

Perhaps the most common approach to teaching new skills is one in which students rely on others to direct their behavior. As described in Chapter 1, *teachers* are taught how to change behaviors through such procedures as, establishment of clear rules and consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. However, sole emphasis on teacher directed procedures can make students overly dependent on teacher interventions to manage their behavior. Our goal is to teach students better ways to cope with unavoidable stress and how to establish and maintain positive relationships *by regulating their own behavior.*

Strategies to teach students to manage their own behavior have various labels depending upon the context in which they are being used or studied. Strategies to teach students how to manage and evaluate themselves around a wide variety of academic tasks may focus on areas such as, organizing themselves for learning, managing their time, studying, writing a theme, reading for comprehension and spelling. Teaching students to self-regulate their behavior in a wide variety of social situations may include responding to teasing, negotiating, reacting to failure, avoiding trouble and, staying out of fights. Self-regulation strategies have also been used to address emotions, such as anger and frustration. For example, when students are faced with situations in which they are accused of something, teased, embarrassed, or frustrated, they may have an emotional reaction which makes it difficult or impossible for them to handle the situation in an appropriate manner. Students can be taught to use a variety of techniques, depending on the situation, to deal with their emotions such as, leave the room until they calm down, count to ten before responding, do a relaxation exercise.

Some advantages of teaching students to regulate their own behavior are:

- It involves students actively participating in the development of their programs, encouraging them to take responsibility for their own behavior.
- The approach is proactive rather than reactive. That is, it teaches students skills that can be used to prevent challenging behaviors from occurring.
- It can produce more enduring changes in students' behaviors. That is, students may manage their behavior even when interventions have been removed and there are no teachers present to supervise.

What are Some Common Strategies Used to Teach Students to Regulate Their Own Behavior?

Teaching students to regulate their own behavior requires more than just breaking down a social skill and role playing the steps. Wood and Long[14] describe self-regulation as emerging from a student being able to understand an event, being motivated to change, and trusting in adults. Understanding an event includes recalling and sequencing what happened, acknowledging their actions and feelings and recognizing how others are reacting. Acquiring the motivation to change includes believing that a situation can change for the better, having sufficient self-esteem to recognize that they deserve something better and having the confidence to try to change. Trust in adults is established and built on students' experiences with adults who respect their feelings, value them, focus on their strengths, and use power wisely. These are some of the essential components of creating a social context for empowering students to assume responsibility for managing their own behavior, controlling their impulses to act on their emotions, adhering to social norms, and developing positive relationships.

The following is a brief description of strategies that enable students to develop self-control:

Self-monitoring teaches students to keep track of their feelings, thoughts and behavior. Students may also be required to make judgments about the quality of their thoughts or behavior. A self-monitoring checklist may include questions such as:

- What happened?
- How were you feeling?
- What positive or negative comments did you tell yourself *before* you acted?
- Were there positive or negative reactions from others?
- What did you tell yourself about how you acted?
- What positive or negative comments did you tell yourself *after* you acted?

Self-instruction teaches students to talk to themselves (think) before, during and after they act. Through self-instruction students can learn to prompt themselves to calm down, talk themselves through the steps of a procedure to control anger, use problem solving routines to come up with a plan of action to resolve a conflict, respond to teasing, problem solve, organize their school work, study for an exam, or write a theme. The following is an example of a six-step procedure used by Weissberg[18] to teach students to solve problems:

- Stop, tell yourself to calm down and think before you act.
- Say what the problem is and how you feel.
- Set a positive goal.
- Think of many solutions.
- Think ahead to what might happen.
- Act out your best choice.

Self-reward teaches students to give themselves positive feedback for how they are acting. Although it is important for all of us to seek out and receive appreciation from others it is equally important to avoid exclusively depending on others to reward our behavior. The steps for rewarding oneself are to recognize that you did a good job, tell yourself "nice going" and do something that you enjoy.

Procedures for teaching self-monitoring, self-instruction, and self-reward usually include some combination of the following.

- **Modeling.** The teacher and other students model using a strategy aloud around targeted situations (e.g., completing assignments, expressing feelings, dealing with anger, staying out of fights, writing a theme).
- **Role Playing.** The teacher and students role play using a strategy to focus on targeted situations.
- **Coaching in Naturally Occurring Situations.** Adults and peers provide prompting and feedback on the use of a strategy in naturally occurring situations.

Are There Prosocial Skills Curriculum Which Address Teaching Students to Manage and Evaluate Themselves?

There are a many programs available for teaching social skills and a few are listed below. The list is not intended to be exhaustive nor to indicate the best ones for your situation. If you are interested in using a curriculum, you should become familiar with several and use the one which best meets your needs along such dimensions as, what social skills it covers, the procedures used to teach the skills and the strategies it employs to insure that students maintain the skills and use them in natural environments. Many social skills curriculums will assist you in selecting what skills to teach and designing lessons. However it is important to integrate the social skills you are teaching into everyday classroom routines. By creating multiple opportunities to practice prosocial skills throughout the day and across environments it will increase the flexible use of these strategies (adults and children role models how to adapt skills to meet the demands of a variety of real-life situations) and increase frequency of positive and specific feedback for using these skills. Typically, social skills curricula teach skills through modeling, role playing and performance feedback.

- Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child (McGinnis & Goldstein, 1984. Champaign, IL: Research Press).
- Skillstreaming the Adolescent (Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, & Klein, 1980. Champaign, IL: Research Press).
- Systematic Instruction of Social Skills (Sargent, 1988. Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA).

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- The Walker Social Skills Curriculum: The Accepts Program (Walker, McConnel, Holmes, Todis, Walker, & Golden, 1983. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed).
- The Access Program (Walker, Todis, Holmes, & Horton, 1988. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed).
- Getting Along with Others: Teaching Social Effectiveness to Children (Jackson, Jackson, & Monroe, 1983. Champaign, IL: Research Press).
- The Yale-New Haven Social Problem Solving Project (Weissberg, Caplan, & Bennetto, 1988).
- Comprehensive Stress Management Program For Children (Ledoux 1985).
- Teaching Children to be Peacemakers (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

Students have had a lot of practice using the challenging behaviors and the behaviors meet their needs. Teaching replacement behaviors will take time. In spite of our best efforts to provide support that prevents the behaviors, they are going to occur until the replacement behaviors are learned. The next step in developing a student support plan is to decide how to respond to the challenging behavior in a manner that is helpful and respectful.

urce: Ruef, M. (1997). Positive behavior support: Strategies for teachers. (pp. 10-28). Lawrence, KS: Beach Center on Families and Disability. Reprinted with permission.

PBS Strategies

Recognizing that teachers favor strategies that work for other teachers, the following are six teacher-recommended, proactive, proven PBS strategies. While most effective after functional assessment, the first five strategies can be put into place without or before a functional assessment.

Strategy #1: Alter the classroom environment. Teachers can remove or modify environmental conditions within their classrooms that "trigger" challenging behaviors in a number of ways.

- *Accommodate individual student environmental needs.* Information gathering may indicate that individual students' behavior is linked to environmental "triggers." Students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), for example, should be seated away from noisy, high-traffic areas. For students who are easily distracted, consider the use of a study carrel or a "quiet" learning center(s), clearly defined work areas (e.g., carpet squares on the floor) that students can "cycle through" in a predictable sequence. Deaf students or those who are hard of hearing should be placed near the front of the class. Portable bulletin boards and other devices may absorb distracting sounds. Other students, for example, students with autism, may be highly sensitive to loud noises, or other sensory stimuli such as particular perfumes or body odors, or particular colors. Providing a noise-sensitive student, for example, with earphones to wear during high noise levels neutralizes the effects of noise and minimizes the likelihood of the behavior.

Consider room arrangement. Learning centers need to have adequate space and be placed far enough apart so that activity and noise levels in one center are not disruptive to students in a neighboring center.

Consider traffic patterns. Too much or too little space may be problematic. While too much space may encourage young students to run, too little space can lead to disruptive bumpings and knockings.

Strategy #2: Increase predictability and scheduling. Uncertainty increases the anxiety levels in most people. All students experience frustration, but especially those with learning challenges. Predictability of classroom routines is their "security blanket." Teachers who can develop or modify their routines to increase predictability will lessen anxieties (and challenging behaviors) for their students. There are several ways of doing this.

- *Schedules.* Create a routine daily schedule and make sure that students are aware of it. Middle or high school teachers may find a student version of a "weekly planner" useful in increasing predictability and appropriate behavior, while elementary teachers may post their schedule prominently in their classroom. Prompting students to refer to their schedule and previewing what is about to happen at numerous times throughout the day also helps. Teachers can use these previews to clearly specify criteria and outcomes for activities. When students know what to do and when to do it, challenging behaviors are less likely to occur. Teachers may need to establish separate individualized routines for students whose attention spans are limited or who are unable to sit for longer blocks of time. Teachers have successfully used "loop tapes," tapes that automatically rewind and replay, to record daily schedules for students who have difficulty remembering or cannot use a written or visual calendar. Students with ADHD may need predictable time periods when they can leave their seats for some activity (e. g., collecting homework, distributing materials, taking attendance to the office) built into their schedules.

Changes. Planned or unplanned changes in daily schedules occur in every school. Assemblies or fire drills may shorten class schedules and alter bell schedules, therapists or paraprofessionals may be absent, busses may be late in arriving or leaving. Preparing students about how these changes will affect their day lessens anxiety. Students who receive therapy on a regular basis appreciate knowing when their therapist is ill, how long the therapist will be gone, and who will provide therapy in the interim. Teachers can present his information in a format best suited to the student's learning style. A picture of the therapist, for example, can be removed from a student's schedule and replaced with a picture symbol representing "ill" for the number of anticipated sick days.

Transitions. Alerting students predictably before transitioning from one activity to another can increase the likelihood of appropriate behavior. These signals give students the opportunity to finish what they are doing before having to put it away. Teachers can choose from a variety of signals; different students may need different kinds (e. g., auditory, tactile, or visual). Many students, for example, respond well to taped music of various lengths (e. g., 2 minutes = approximately one song, 5 minutes = approximately 2 songs, 10 minutes = approximately four songs) to signal the end of various activities. As students repeatedly hear a particular song(s), they know that an activity is ending within a given period of time. Lastly, minimize waiting periods or provide other activities for early finishers promotes appropriate behavior. When students are engaged with people or materials, they are less likely to exhibit challenging behaviors.

Strategy #3: Increase choice making. Many people with disabilities (especially students with limited motor skills, verbal skills, or challenging behaviors) are not provided with opportunities to make significant choices in their daily lives. They are often told what tasks they must perform, with whom they may interact, and what rewards they may have. Because these students have difficulty expressing choice, choice making should be systematically taught and monitored in the same ways as other skills. Providing students with challenging behavior with opportunities to make choices is another way of teaching them that they can influence others without having to resort to challenging behavior. Providing choice does not mean allowing students to control situations in which they pose a danger to themselves or others. Nor does it mean allowing them to do anything that they want to do. It does mean permitting students to make choices as part of an approach aimed at increasing student's inclusion, productivity and independence. By empowering students to make choices, teachers can help balance student feelings of powerlessness. Teachers, parents, and students together can create a list of choices, but the student, whenever possible, makes the final selection. Teachers might consider the following checklist in offering choices to a student with challenging behavior:

- assess choice making skills
- identify types and extent of choices available
- whenever appropriate and feasible, provide opportunities for choice
- create options that are related to factors controlling challenging behavior e.g. if a student is motivated by escape from task demands, provide an array of tasks from which to choose, if motivated by attention, provide a variety of individuals (teacher, aide, peer tutor) with whom the student can choose to interact
- allow person to choose one of the available options and honor that choice
- honor choices not offered unless disruptive or prevents important goals from being met
- provide natural consequences for failure to

make choices (e. g., you choose for the student) embed choice into activity or task when possible

Strategy #4: Make curricular adaptations. Modifications made to enhance a student's performance in completing activities and to reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviors have a significant relationship between curricular activities and students' positive and negative behaviors. Activities/tasks that students intended to use in home or community that are age-appropriate significantly correspond with positive behavior whereas activities/tasks that do not reflect these characteristics correspond with challenging behaviors. What can a teacher do to adapt curriculum in instances where information suggests the existing curriculum is prompting challenging behavior? Try these four practices

Consider the nature of the assigned task/activity and the way it is presented. Is the task or activity of high or low interest level? Too easy or too difficult? Too long or too short? Too fast or slow paced?

Adjust the nature of the task/activity. Presenting material using different modalities (e. g., auditory, visual, tactile) or shortening instruction to highly structured blocks of 20 minutes or less have proved successful. Task variation, or interspersing previously learned tasks among new tasks is another strategy. Especially when a new skill is relatively difficult for a student, studies have shown that constant task strategies (massed trials) often result in waning motivation and performance and increase off-task behaviors. By interspersing previously mastered tasks, teachers ensure variety in their lessons by incorporating different types of instructions rather than the same task repeatedly. Task variation also ensures a level of student competence by rewarding each successful performance of the already mastered task as well as for successes with the new task._Teachers might have initial concerns about using their limited instructional time with techniques that slow the pace of instruction or frequently "review" previously learned material. At least for relatively difficult tasks, research has shown that frequent presentation of previously learned tasks is a more efficient teaching strategy than the constant task (or massed trials) approach. A third way to adjust the nature of the task/activity is by taking advantage of student interests and preferred activities. This does not mean spoiling students by always letting them engage in preferred activities. It does, however, mean planning preferred activities to occur consistently and predictably throughout each day and week. If, for example, a student is highly motivated by computer technology, opportunities to complete tasks on the computer should serve as anchors in the student's daily and weekly schedule. In addition, nonpreferred tasks (e. g., learning multiplication tables) can be "embedded" within the context of a preferred task or activity (e. g., computer use -using an animated computer software program to teach multiplication).

Adjust the method of presentation/ monitoring. Teachers can adjust methods of presentation/monitoring of learning tasks or activities to meet the diverse needs of students. Two that deserve special attention for students with challenging behavior are direct instruction and self monitoring. Direct instruction is an approach emphasizing group instruction and face-to-face instruction using carefully sequenced lessons. Research supports the use of direct instruction for hard-to-reach students and seems particularly applicable to students with challenging behaviors. Maximizing academic learning time and providing a structured learning environment limits the opportunities students have to disrupt and/or exhibit challenging behavior. While there is no single type of direct instruction, many programs have the following characteristics: Well-scripted and preplanned teacher presentations, fast-paced presentations, use of small groups to maximize student responding, oral group responding to monitor learning of all students, individual mastery tests, student motivation maintained by teacher praise/ reinforcement/encouragement, and immediate error correction.

Consider, also, using self-monitoring, a powerful, easily implemented intervention. It has been used successfully with students ranging from average achievers to students with moderate and severe disabilities as a technique to increase results in disruptive behaviors as well as academic skills, homework completion, on-task responding , and articulation. Self-monitoring is accomplished by teaching students to identify and record occurrences of behavior and then rewarding them both for successful self-monitoring and for challenging behaviors decreases. Self-monitoring involves: (a) defining the target behavior (see functional assessment above), (b) identifying preferred reinforcers, (c) designing a self-monitoring device/method, (d) teaching the student to use the device, and (e) fading the use of the device. The advantages of self-monitoring include increases in students' independent responding, more generalization and durability of behavior change, and a reduced amount of teacher supervision.

Provide peer support. While peer support is dependent upon a "personality match" and may not work in every instance, it has proved successful for students with challenging behavior. Two types of peer support are peer tutoring and the PALS approach. Researchers have found that peer tutors use more age-appropriate vocabulary and examples than the teacher does, can identify with the frustration of learning material, and tend to be more direct and supportive than adults. Peer tutoring can provide structured practice or review, for students to serve as monitors for other students, or to reinforce teacher-directed instruction. Peers can take notes using a carbon paper if a "buddy" with ADHD has problems listening and taking notes. A copy will then be available for the "buddy" and the stress of listening and writing will be reduced. Teachers have also found the PALS approach particularly useful for teaching social skills to younger children. This approach based on arranging the environment Pairs typical learners with those with disabilities during activities, Arranges for adults to be absent from the activity or reduce their rate of interaction, Limits the number and variety of materials available during activities (to those that occasion interaction), and Structures the activity so that children work toward a cooperative goal and understand their role in achieving the goal. Using this approach, teachers can arrange a number of play areas with different materials/devices to set the occasion for different child behaviors.

Strategy #5: Appreciate positive behaviors. Ideally, students will do the "right" thing in the "right" way with the "right" attitude. Actually, that's just how it is for a lot of people. They don't need to be encouraged with constant praise, trinkets, or future promises. Their reward is the activity or behavior itself. However, many students don't have the social, learning or behavioral skills that will help them thrive in the classroom or community. In this circumstance, many use positive reinforcement. Simply put, this method teaches a person to act a certain way by rewarding that person for correct behavior. The theory is that if someone gets a reward for an action, then that person is more likely to do that action again. Positive reinforcement, which has been studied in great detail in the last 25 years, has proved to be an important part of the learning process . To encourage positive behavior, figure out the exact behavior that would benefit the student and the people around the student. Start with easier skills and break down more complex tasks into achievable steps. You may also consider teaching self-monitoring skills that will support more durable behavior changes and decrease the amount of adult supervision required. Make sure you have the right rewards: Training will have little effect without a good reinforcer. Decide what the student—not you— views as rewards. One person's preference is not the same as another's. Typical rewards include: Food, sensations (listening to music), materials (stickers, badges, certificates), activities (working on a preferred activity or with a special friend), and privileges (extra free time, new seating arrangement)

A good way to start is to ask the student what would be a reward for him or her. In situations where a student is unable to verbalize, try offering several choices. Do this several times to make sure. If a reward can be paired with a natural reinforcer, all the better. For example, for a socially motivated student, a soda pop (extrinsic reward) might be paired with social interactions that naturally occur (intrinsic reward) in the course of performing small jobs such as taking attendance to the office. This pairing ultimately allows the behavior (task completion) to be maintained in a natural, or intrinsic way. At first, rewards should be given immediately and frequently when the person exhibits proper behavior. (During this time, ignore challenging behavior unless it is dangerous or destructive.) Keep rewards interesting. Rewards will probably have to be changed at different times to keep them desirable. For certain students, you also can use tokens, points, or other scoring devices that the person will collect to trade in for a larger reward.

Strategy #6: Teach replacement skills. Many challenging behaviors occur because the student does not know a more appropriate way to achieve an important outcome. By teaching appropriate, alternative responses that serve the same purpose as the challenging behavior, teachers can reduce the incidence of challenging behavior and increase the skill level of their students. Unlike Strategies 1-5 that may simply be implemented as "best practices" without knowledge of a behavior's purpose, teaching an alternative response depends on knowing the challenging behavior's purpose(s) determined during the functional assessment. Many times the alternative responses taught are communicative in nature (e g., appropriate ways to get attention/assistance, request a break or change of activity etc.) . Suppose a student, Mark, runs from the classroom or designated task areas to escape difficult tasks or learning situations. Suppose also that the grabbing, hitting, pulling hair, and/or kicking he does when staff use restraint to keep him from leaving, trashing the room, or escorting him back to class, serves the additional purpose of prolonging attention from teachers and peers. In this instance, replacement behaviors might involve three areas. One place to start might be with social skills. Mark doesn't know to "connect" with others. The PALS program might help him learn to greet people, express positive statements, share enjoyable activities, and meet some needs of friends while they meet some of his. In addition, as Mark is angry with others for not giving him attention, he needs to learn to recognize and appropriately express his anger (role playing, dialog, verbal rehearsal, modeling and eliciting feelings) and diffuse it through direct communication and stress management techniques such as deep breathing. In addition, Mark and his teacher need to work out a system that works for both of them whereby Mark can communicate that a task or activity is too difficult. Finally, all these strategies need to implemented together with necessary environmental, and/or curricular changes (e. g., that Mark has a safe, but otherwise non-reinforcing place to calm down and that difficult tasks be shortened or embedded within easier segments) and that positive behavior be reinforced.

Although some social skills training may be appropriate for the classroom (e. g., all students could benefit), other training may be more appropriately conducted outside the classroom by a counselor, psychologist, or other school support person.

Finally, teachers must consider both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the alternative behaviors they choose to teach. In the case of Mark, running from the room took relatively little time or energy and produced the "double-barrel" effect of allowing him to escape from an overly difficult assignment and drawing the attention of both teacher and peers. To be successful, replacement behaviors must be as, or more effective and efficient for Mark as running from the room. Proactively adapting the difficulty level of his assignments, allowing him (at least initially) to move to a calm-down area, together with positive reinforcement (attention) for academic and social successes equal to or greater than the attention received for running from the room (while minimizing the attention for challenging behavior), should produce positive effects.

Unit 3 Activity Sheets

Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Activity Sheet

Prevention Scenarios

1. Steven is in the 10th grade. He frequently argues with his World Civilization teacher whenever a controversial subject is brought up. It doesn't seem to matter what the topic is or which side the teacher presents, Steven always argues and must have the last word. If he feels he is losing the argument (that he started), he gets angry, threatening and sometimes leaves the room. Steven's team has gathered information about this behavior. They have identified that the function of the behavior is to gain a sense of control. What strategies in your readings might be useful to prevent this behavior from disrupting the class discussions?

2. When Casey, who is in 6th grade, has math worksheets to do she often "shuts down" and refuses to work. The team has determined that this behavior is a reflection of her desire to escape having to do work she perceives as too difficult. What strategies described in your readings might be useful to prevent this behavior from interfering with Casey's learning?

3. Doria is twelve and newly arrived in this country. He speaks very little English and is unfamiliar with many facets of "pop" culture. He travels to school alone because he doesn't know anyone yet. He frequently plays "tough" on the playground and often interferes with games that other students are playing. After extensive observation and collection of information, Doria's team has determined that he engages in these behaviors to get attention from his peers. What prevention strategies described in your readings might be useful for Doria?

4. In third grade, Harry was considered to be shy and withdrawn. But, this year in fourth grade, he has become the class clown. When there is a transition to a new activity, he often gets up and runs around the class, makes funny noises, giggles, etc. This behavior is especially pronounced whenever he has to perform something for the group (e.g., an individual reading or a role-play). Harry's team has collected data and found that this happens regularly before and after class and whenever the spotlight is on Harry. They have determined that he engages in these behaviors to escape uncomfortable social situations and to deflect attention from him to the jokes. What prevention strategies are outlined in your book that might prevent these disruptions?

5. Tapping his pencil, rocking and humming to himself is the way Karl takes tests. His rocking annoys other students to the point of distraction. At one point, his teacher removed him to the hallway, where he became so upset at being isolated that he ran away and refused to complete his work. He's received two detentions for this behavior already after being told to stop. He says he can't help himself. His team has determined that these behaviors occur to decrease his anxiety around tests and to relieve extra tension. Therefore, they are considered to be self-regulatory. What ideas might you find in the readings that could prevent these disruptive behaviors?

Replacement Behaviors 40 min.
Role-play agenda

Agenda Item	Time
1. Read your assigned role-play scenario (because of a social skill deficit, this student handles a situation poorly)	1 min.
2. Identify four actors from your groups, one of which is the student, and assign them parts in the scenario.	1 min.
3. From your readings on social skills and behaviors, identify the replacement (or social) skill that you want to teach.	7 min.
4. Identify a situation in which the replacement behavior is most likely to be needed.	1 min.
5. Create a role-play that illustrates the challenging behavior and your chosen replacement skill. Be sure to include the setting, scene, and dialogue.	15 min.
6. Act out the role-play for the class (about 5 minutes for each including discussion)	15 min.

Replacement Behaviors Role-play Scenarios

ESCAPE: Students are seated in a 9th-grade mathematics class. The teacher asks the students to take out a piece of paper for a quiz in which they will need to explain in writing how to solve an equation. Sam is great at mathematics calculations but hates to write. If he needs to write answers he gets frustrated. Using language to explain something is not his idea of mathematics anyway. What makes things even more anxiety provoking is that he did not understand the lecture and the examples of equations today. He also forgot his book and is embarrassed to borrow a neighbor's pencil! It's all just too much for him, and he decides to shut down and not do *anything*. The teacher confronts him on why he's not doing any work at all and just sitting there. His response is, "Why should I? This is stupid–where did you learn math? People don't have to write in math–they do math. No wonder our test scores are so low compared to Japan!" Then after insulting the teacher he packs up his stuff and leaves the room disrupting everyone else in the class.

ATTENTION: Mindy and Sara are 10th-grade girls who are sitting together and giggling in the cafeteria. Nora, a girl who is always in some kind of trouble, wants to join in the fun, interrupts them and sits down right across from them. When they ignore her she reaches across the table and takes their trays and purses. When they confront her with, "Hey, don't take that!" she begins teasing them with the items. They do not see this as funny and both lunge after her to get the purse and call her names to express their anger.

CONTROL: Andrew is an 11th-grade student who cannot sing well or play an instrument. In his music class he constantly jokes around and creates disturbances. Today he has decided that he can get the entire class going (and not have to sing or read music!) by writing nasty things on the blackboard before class. He writes nasty things about the teacher, Mrs. Evans, and draws humorous pictures of her. The students are hysterical with laughter when she walks in; when she confronts him on his artwork, he sings a song in a loud (off key) voice so that no one else can sing. Then she asks him to leave, at which point he asks her to leave and refuses to go. The students are laughing even harder.

Unit 3 Forms

Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

- Knowledge Review
- Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary
- Unit Evaluation Form

Knowledge Review

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Site: ____________________

Instructor: ____________________

Directions: Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.

21. Over a long period of time, which of the following is the least effective in preventing misbehaviors from occurring?
    a) helping students minimize contact with activities that precede misbehaviors
    b) avoiding things that trigger misbehavior
    c) making changes in an environment so things are more predictable and less ambiguous
    d) informing students of the consequences they may face if they misbehave

22. For students who exhibit a challenging behavior as a way to get control, which strategy would be the most effective at preventing problems?
    a) excluding the student from class
    b) providing activities that are not stressful
    c) giving the student choices
    d) giving the student more attention

23. If the function of a student's behavior is to get attention, which of the following is most likely to prevent the behavior?
    a) ignore the attempts at getting attention
    b) punish the student when he/she engages in the behavior
    c) provide an alternative way for the student to get attention
    d) give the student stickers when he or she no longer needs attention

24. A good way to increase opportunities for getting attention include which of the following?
    a) encouraging students to join clubs
    b) adhering strictly to routines
    c) giving students flexibility in their schedule
    d) pointing out student mistakes while in large groups

25. An example of a physical/environmental prevention strategy is:
    a) improving mathematics skills
    b) limiting relationships with classmates
    c) changing a student's seating to allow more engagement with the curriculum
    d) increasing auditory processing skills

26. If a student misbehaves, "I-messages," interpretive feedback, and quiet messages are ways to:
    a) communicate with students without singling them out or embarrassing them
    b) assign blame and prevent future misbehaviors
    c) hold students accountable for their behavior
    d) teach other students a lesson about consequences of bad behavior.

27. Which of the following teaching styles is most likely to result in fewer challenging behaviors?
    a) authoritarian
    b) permissive
    c) apathetic
    d) democratic

28. What is the best way to teach a new behavior to replace a disruptive behavior?
    a) explaining to the student how to practice the new behavior
    b) reprimanding the student for using the old behavior
    c) showing and modeling how to do the new behavior
    d) informing the student of consequences for not performing the skill

29. Which of the following is an important set of social skills students might need to learn?
    a) how to avoid social situations
    b) how to outline and summarize a story
    c) how to control one's anger
    d) how to take notes in social sciences class

30. What element of good teaching is most important for students to generalize their new social skills to different settings?
    a) frequent modeling
    b) continually charting their behavior
    c) helping students use their new skills in other places
    d) taking away privileges when students don't use their new skills
    e) breaking the skills into small steps

Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Note: The paraeducator will choose one of the practicum requirements listed below to complete for Unit 3.

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss prevention strategies for the student with challenging behaviors identified in the practicum requirement for Unit 1.

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher should begin the prevention strategy with a review of the data collected in the practicum requirement for Unit 2. Next, the paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will review the **communicative function** of the behavior chosen in the practicum requirement for Unit 2.

c) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will use the support strategies for **preventing** problem behaviors (located in each of the required readings in Unit 3 of the Participant's Manual) to select the strategies that respond to the particular communicative function discussed in step "b" above.

d) The paraeducator will record the identified strategies for preventing problem behavior, which the paraeducator is responsible for helping to implement below. The cooperating teacher will mark a check next to the strategy to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated it.

Identified Strategies for Preventing Problem Behavior

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to review replacement behaviors for the behavior selected in the practicum requirement for Unit 2 (refer to the reading by Topper, Williams, Leo, Hamilton & Fox, "Example of Additional Skill Areas to Be Taught." Figure 6.1, located in the Participant's Manual).

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will identify the paraeducator's role in supporting the replacement behaviors (e.g., modeling replacement behaviors, reinforcing replacement behaviors, helping the student to practice replacement behaviors).

c) The paraeducator will record his/her role in supporting replacement behaviors below, and the cooperating teacher will mark a check next to the role to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated that role.

Paraeducator's Role in Supporting Replacement Behaviors:

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Unit 3 Evaluation Form
Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Participant name (optional): ____________________ Date: ________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   - ☐ very important
   - ☐ important
   - ☐ somewhat important
   - ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

4. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

5. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

6. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

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7. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

8. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

9. What was the most important or useful thing that you learned from this unit?

10. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Unit 4:

Responding to Challenging Behaviors

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Participant's Overview

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Brief Description of the Unit

This unit provides information for paraeducators on how to respond to challenging behavior in ways that are effective and that interrupt the conflict cycle. Information is provided on how to respond verbally in clear ways, how to avoid power struggles, and how to avoid counter aggression.

Hours of Instruction (in class format)

3 hours

Unit Objectives

Key: K = Knowledge; S = Skill (Knowledge objectives are addressed through readings and class activities; skill objectives are addressed through practicum activities.

1. Paraeducators will learn clear and supportive responses to behavior. (K)
2. Paraeducators will learn about the conflict cycle. (K)
3. Paraeducators will learn ways to calm stressful or challenging behavior situations. (K)
4. Paraeducators will demonstrate ways to respond to misbehavior and to calm aggressive or challenging behavior situations. (S)

Preparing For the Unit

Required Readings

Backus, L. (2000). *Responding to challenging behavior.* (Unpublished manuscript.) Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Beach Center on Families and Disability. (1998). *Discipline and punishment* (handout) University of Kansas, Lawrence: Author.

Bondurant-Utz, J., Raimondi, S., & Smith, M. (1994). *Strategy profiles for teachers who work with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities* (pp. 13-14). Buffalo, NY: State University College at Buffalo.

Curwin, R., & Mendler, A. (1995). Discipline with dignity guide. In *Strategies for reaching disruptive and angry students: Creating caring communities* (pp. 25-30) Conference proceedings, Stowe, VT, July 1995. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Keogh, W. (1996). *Behavioral crises in schools: Some intervention strategies.* (Unpublished manuscript.) Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

National Education Service. (1996). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future : A facilitator's guide to the video series* (p. 96). Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Vermont Department of Education. (1998). *Preventing and responding to school disruption and violence: Recommendations and guidelines of the task force on school violence* (pp. 5-6). Montpelier, VT: Author.

Participant Preparation for Unit 4:

- Read the required readings **prior to the class.**
- Based on the required readings, write two questions that are relevant to you or your situation for discussion in class.
- Bring writing materials for note-taking and activities to class.
- Review the practicum requirements for Unit 4.
- Bring your Participant's Manual to class.

Practicum Requirements

This unit has one required practicum activity, which is designed to be completed at the end of the course. The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will collaborate to complete that activity. A practicum checklist of the activity to be completed is located at the end of the manual. In the event that a practicum requirement is not appropriate for a paraeducator's specific situation, an alternate activity may be substituted based on negotiation with the cooperating teacher and approval by the course instructor.

Evaluation of Participant Learning

Participants are evaluated in three ways: (1) attendance and participation in class activities, (2) *Knowledge Review* quiz, and (3) completion of practicum requirements. In order to facilitate learning of required readings, participants will take the *Knowledge Review* quiz at the end of each class session and will receive immediate feedback in class. Participants are encouraged to review questions before class so they can be aware of them during class. This can improve a participant's performance on the quizzes.

Suggested Supplemental Resources

Books and Articles:

Charles, C.M. (1999). *Building classroom discipline* (6th ed.). New York: Longman.

Daniels, V. (1998). How to manage disruptive behavior in inclusive classrooms. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 30* (4) 26-30.

Jones, V. & Jones, L. (1998). *Comprehensive classroom management: Creating communities of support and solving problems* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Keating, B., Pickering, M., Slack, B. & White, J. (1990). *A guide to positive discipline.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Mendler, A. (1992). *What do I do when? How to achieve discipline with dignity in the classroom.* Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Topper, K., Williams, W., Leo, K., Hamilton, R., & Fox, T. (1994). *A positive approach to understanding challenging behaviors: Supporting educators and families include students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in regular education.* Burlington: University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

Web Sites:

Council for Exceptional Children
http://www.cec.sped.org

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders:
http://www.ccbd.net

Crisis Prevention Institute
http://www. crisisprevention.com

Parent-Teacher Organizations
http://www.pta.org/programs/sfgrdtoc.htm

Tri-State Consortium on Positive Behavior Supports
http://www.positiveapproaches.org

Videos:

National Educational Service. (1995). *Discipline with dignity* [Video series]. Bloomington, IN: Author.

Cambridge Educational. (1998). *Conflict resolution series: Preventing violence.* Charleston, WV: Author.

Effective strategies for de-escalating elementary students. Brookfield, WI: Crisis Prevention Institute.

Unit 4 Required Readings

Responding to Challenging Behavior

This unit focuses on how to respond to challenging behaviors that may range from disruptive to explosive. It is important for you to know that paraeducators are not responsible for responding to challenging behaviors alone. You will have support from the student's educational planning team, which is responsible for developing plans and procedures for responding to the student's challenging behavior. Your individual supervisor and school should also have policies and procedures, such as the school's discipline policy or code of conduct, with which you should be familiar and which will help you understand what behavior is considered appropriate within the classroom and the school, respectively. Make sure you become familiar with those in addition to the following readings.

The first reading (Backus, 2000) summarizes ways to respond to misbehavior, prevent challenging behavior, diffuse power struggles, and respond to verbal or physical aggression. The second article, from the Beach Center on Families and Disability (1998), makes an important distinction between discipline and punishment. This brief article explains why punishment after a challenging behavior has occurred is less than effective and why we need more effective and positive ways to respond after such behaviors occur.

The reading by Curwin and Mendler (1995) provides lists of things to say and do to respond to rule violations, prevent power struggles, and explain consequences to a student without escalating a situation.

A next reading by Bondurant-Utz, Raimondi and Smith (1994) provides more specific information on how to interrupt the conflict cycle (once in it) and how to talk to children when they are in crisis.

The reading by Keogh (1996) provides additional information on de-escalation of crisis situations. This reading provides information on how to read body language, how to maintain professionalism, and how to avoid danger.

The subsequent reading, by the National Education Service (1996), describes how the conflict cycle works and what impact it can have on an untrained adult. It provides a brief list of ways to disengage from the conflict cycle.

The last reading, from the Vermont Department of Education (1998), gives specific suggestions for how to de-escalate a crisis situation and includes a list of best practices for schools to build capacity for meeting the needs of students with challenging behaviors.

Responding to Challenging Behavior

Linda Backus

Center on Disability and Community Inclusion
The University Affiliated Program of Vermont
Burlington, Vermont (2000)

We know how important it is to prevent challenging behavior and to help students with challenging behaviors learn new behavioral and social skills. Sometimes, even with our best efforts, some students still have difficulty controlling their behaviors or engage in misbehaviors that ultimately become challenging. Challenging behaviors are those that might be distracting, disruptive, or potentially destructive.

An effective response to a student's misbehavior minimizes disruption, protects the student's dignity, provides for a learning experience, maintains positive relationships, is safe, and eventually results in positive student change. Such outcomes cannot be achieved by punitive or reactive approaches. It takes a supportive community to build positive social adjustments (Welkowitz & Backus, 1996).

Prerequisites

In order to effectively respond to misbehaviors as a paraeducator, you will need to know the classroom expectations for behavior and have a clear understanding of the classroom rules and consequences. You will need to know the student's learning and communication styles and strengths. You will also need to know exactly when to defer to the classroom teacher when responding to challenging behavior. Since each teacher is different, that decision must be made between the paraeducator and each teacher. In general, paraeducators engage in surface management of behaviors to help the teacher keep the classroom running smoothly. Surface management includes little things done either to prevent misbehavior or to catch it early so its impact is minimized. For example, separating two students who are beginning to quarrel, or recognizing that a student is overly stimulated and giving him some quiet or calm activity so that he can regroup. Serious infractions or significant behavioral challenges generally become the purview of the teacher or special educator and ultimately of the student's team, which will put together a long-term plan for prevention, teaching replacement behaviors, and developing response plans.

Responding to misbehavior

When the routine of the classroom is disrupted by the challenging behavior of a student, teachers and paraeducators often experience increased anxiety. This may result in a confrontational or demanding reaction to the student, which may further increase the student's stress and escalate the behavior. A student who is agitated may not comply with requests, and if the teacher makes more demands, a negative chain of events called the conflict cycle can occur. This should be avoided as much as possible because the likelihood of finding a calm resolution, maintaining dignity, and minimizing disruption is diminished as the conflict cycle escalates.

Several steps can be taken to avoid the conflict cycle. The first step is the initial response to the challenging behavior. When a challenging behavior disrupts the class, it is important to speak to the student:

- calmly and privately,
- in close proximity (without violating his or her personal space),
- maintaining eye contact.

In this way, embarrassment of the student and disruption to the class are minimized and the student is most likely to hear the message without being provoked. The message to be conveyed should include:

- the student's name (draws attention to you and your message);
- the behavior (clarifies what the issue is);
- how it affects you or the class (an "I-message" that helps the student understand the behavior's impact); and
- a reminder of or redirection to what the appropriate or correct behavior is (helps the student correct his or her behavior).

An example of this technique follows: "Karla, I know that you are anxious to get to recess, but throwing an eraser disrupts the class and upsets me. If you want to get my attention, you should raise your hand." This message combines acknowledgment of the student, identification of the behavior, use of an I-message to indicate impact, and redirection to the appropriate behavior. In many cases, this is all that is necessary to prevent further escalation or disruption. Sometimes, however, students may continue to try to engage in conflict or to create a power struggle.

Diffusing power struggles

Sometimes, students may continue to argue about an infraction, deny that there is a problem, or claim to be treated unfairly. These behaviors are examples of power struggles in their earliest stages. To diffuse potential power struggles, avoid engaging in these "traps." Sometimes you can arrange to meet with the student at another time, such as after class, to resolve the problem or disagreement. Students may try to change the subject or distract you from the issue at hand. Do not accept excuses, and try not to think of "winning" or "losing" the argument. The goal is not to win, the goals are to help the student learn a new way of responding, to maintain your relationship, and to maintain the student's dignity.

Responses to avoid

What teachers and paraeducators say, in response to a misbehavior, and how they say it, can make all the difference in the world. Some things to avoid include trying to find fault or blame for the incident, arguing with the disputants, and minimizing the seriousness of the conflict. The following list provides examples of responses that usually make things worse (Albert, 1996) and should be avoided:

- raising one's voice
- insisting on having the last word
- using degrading, insulting, or embarrassing put-downs
- attacking the student's character
- saying "you never" or "you always"

- preaching
- pleading or bribing
- making assumptions
- yelling
- backing the student into a corner
- giving the student an ultimatum
- nagging
- throwing a temper tantrum
- mimicking the student
- comparing the student with others
- commanding or dominating

Some of these responses may stop the student for a moment, but the price can be very high for a short period of control. Eventually, the situation may escalate, and the relationship between you and the student might be damaged.

Responding to a conflict between students

Sometimes as a paraeducator you will come across two or more students engaged in a conflict or argument. This is not the same problem as a minor class disruption, but it requires some thoughtful resolution on your part.

Things you can do to address conflicts are to:

- invite the students to work things out in a neutral, private area;
- share ground rules with them (for example, explain that what is said is confidential, that your role is neutral, and that they must cooperate if they choose to solve the problem);
- gather basic information about the facts of the conflict;
- check for accuracy and clarity about those facts;
- listen and summarize;
- find and focus on common interests;
- help the students brainstorm options to solve the problem, including:
    - sharing,
    - splitting the difference,
    - taking turns,
    - postponing,
    - flipping a coin,
    - getting outside help;
- help the students choose a solution and try it out.

Responding to verbal and/or physical acts of aggression

As a paraeducator, you should be familiar with classroom and school procedures for dealing with a behavioral crisis before you encounter one. Most schools have clearly outlined procedures for what to do in those circumstances. Some schools also have a crisis team of people who can be called upon in a behavioral emergency.

A behavioral crisis can involve verbal or physical aggression or both. Teacher or paraeducator behavior can contribute to escalation, which increases anger and stress, or de-escalation, which decreases anger and stress and leads to a calmer state. During a crisis students go through a number of phases of increased agitation and anxiety, then often have a burst of rage. It is important to remain calm and rational throughout the episode, to control one's own "counter aggression," and to de-escalate the tension.

Counter aggression refers to all of one's angry feelings and the desire for revenge that may develop into aggressive actions when one feels threatened. Ways to handle this include avoiding ultimatums ("either you do this, or …"), remaining clear in terms of what needs to be done and why, and offering alternatives (if any exist). Keep an eye on your body language and remain calm throughout the incident.

In general, do not try to restrain or hold a student who is physically assaultive or out of control. If a student who is out of control is verbalizing or yelling, try to isolate the situation (if you can). Sometimes the student can be asked to move, at other times the students can leave the setting. Although you can provide emotional or verbal support to the student, do not try to physically move him or her. Sometimes just walking with the student can help him or her calm down. The goal is to relieve tension and calm the student as much as possible. Your main goal in such an emergency situation is to keep the student who is out of control, other students, and yourself safe until more help arrives.

Once the student has begun to calm down, he or she may be embarrassed and remorseful. At that point, reassurance and a plan for what's next are important. Assure the student that although there may be consequences, things are still under control.

The use of punishment during a crisis is generally not recommended because it frequently makes things worse and increases stress. It is often not safe. It does not teach an alternative response and may have a negative impact on the student's self-esteem.

References

Albert, L. (1996). *Cooperative discipline*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.

Welkowitz, J.A., & Backus, L. (1996). *Building a supportive community to promote resiliency and positive social development of youth*. Burlington and Montpelier, VT: The University Affiliated Program of Vermont, University of Vermont; and The BEST Initiative, Vermont Department of Education.

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Discipline and Punishment

Undesirable behavior makes it hard for children with disabilities to be integrated into the community. These behaviors (e.g., hitting, self-injury, arm flapping, etc.) also restrict learning and relationships, besides providing extra stress on families.

Various methods can reduce challenging behavior. One way is positive behavioral support, a method that tries to find "why" the child demonstrates the behavior, then teaches a more appropriate behavior to meet that need.

Another method is aversive conditioning. This method often uses quick applications of discomfort or pain in response to challenging behavior. Applications may be a sharp criticism, slap, spanking, offensive sound, removal of a desired object, isolation, an offensive spray, or another unattractive response.

While some people support this method (in different degrees), others do not. They say it does not teach what to do, only what not to do. Often-mentioned flaws are:

- Aversive conditioning is not effective over time. It may work for a short time, but unwanted behavior re-emerges.
- When a teacher yells or hits, then the child is taught that yelling or hitting is an acceptable reaction to an event. Basic learning comes from imitation.
- A child often learns only not to do the behavior when the punishing person is present. In essence, the child learns not to "get caught."
- Punishment can act as a reward. Some children may enjoy seeing an adult get upset and lose control. The children may like the attention (even though it is negative) they receive.
- Challenging behaviors frequently become worse. Children can become more aggressive, withdraw, redirect their frustration and strike out at others, or escape the setting to avoid punishment.
- Children who receive aversive conditioning may learn to fear or dislike the person applying the punishment. They also may dislike the setting, objects, and events associated with the punishment.
- Children's self esteem generally decreases dramatically when punishment is applied.
- The person applying punishment often may resort to harsh discipline more than he or she needs to because of its immediate effect and not use other methods. Worse, the applier may use heavier doses of punishment or become addicted to applying pain.
- Rick of injury exists when aversive conditioning is used. The person applying punishment may also be charged with assault or child abuse.
- Application of harsh punishment does not examine "why" the behavior occurred and try to prevent the behavior from occurring

Positive behavioral support methods recognize that challenging behaviors have been found to stem from attention needs, sensory stimuli, biochemical factors, escape, crowding, staff change, exercise, task repetition, and other well-documented reasons. Besides eliminating the cause, positive behavioral supports offer alternatives to aversive conditioning in reducing challenging behavior, including:

- Teaching new skills so behavior is not needed
- Changing the environment to better fit individual
- Ignoring behavior (if not dangerous)
- Letting the behavior (if not harmful) be done repeatedly until person tires of it
- Substituting constructive activity
- Removing the person from stimuli and giving the person time to relax

These nonaversive behavior strategies are humane, effective, socially accepted, legal, practical, and contribute to positive attitudes toward people with disabilities.

For more information on positive behavioral support, call the Family Connection at 1-800-854-4938. Ask for our free fact sheets and a listing of related articles, too.

This is a product of The Family Connection. The Family Connection, under the directorship of Rob Horner (University of Oregon), the Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Positive Behavioral Support, conducts research on the causes of challenging behaviors and strategies for support. Working with the RRTC are the University of Oregon, California State University, State University of New York at Stony Brook, University of South Florida, University of California at Santa Barbara, and the University Affiliated Program and the Beach Center on Families and Disability at the University of Kansas.

The Beach Center (3111 Haworth, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045, 785-864-7600) takes the researchers' work and gets it to families in as many ways as possible.

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Source: Bondurant-Utz, J., Raimondi, S. & Smith, M. (1994). *Strategy profiles for teachers who work with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities* (pp. 13-14). Buffalo, NY: State University College at Buffalo.

Strategy Profile
The Conflict Cycle

Overview

Teachers expect students to behave. They want an orderly classroom. Teachers expect students to work quietly in small groups with a minimal amount of disruption. When a student who has an emotional disturbance disrupts the normal routine of the classroom and responds to the teacher in a bizarre manner, several things may happen. Often because this behavior catches teachers off guard, many teachers use the "macho" method of discipline, "You will comply because I am in charge." Other teachers see the inappropriate behavior as a personal attack. In either case, when teachers react in counter aggressive ways, students often do not comply but, instead, escalate their behavior. Teachers often jump right back in with another demand and students respond in an equally negative manner. This reactive chain of events, often referred to as the Conflict Cycle (Wood & Long, 1991), can continue round and round until there are no winners, only losers. Students who are emotionally disturbed often unconsciously try to get teachers to mirror their inner feelings. If they feel all adults are hostile, then they will try to incite professionals to react in this manner. Many times their anger or hostility is not directed at the teacher. Reactive behavior may stem from previous stress. It is important that educators realize that these behaviors are a result of the students' disability, not because they want to misbehave. Once teachers are aware of the Conflict Cycle, they can take steps to avoid being caught in this web.

Steps for Implementation

Before teachers can break the Conflict Cycle, they need to be aware of the five components of the cycle and how it works.

- **Self concept** - The child's values, beliefs, and images of self strongly affect behavior.
- **Stress** - Four different types of stress (physical, psychological, reality, or developmental) can magnify the behavior of a child.
- **Feelings** - Children with SED have been taught that certain feelings are bad or unacceptable. These feelings will surface in a disguised form as observable behavior.
- **Observable Behavior** - The child's self concept, stress, and feelings are acted out in overt behavior.
- **Teacher Reaction** - How one reacts to the behavior either ends or continues the cycle.

At the first signs of conflict, teachers need to stop and analyze the situation. They need to ask themselves if they are mirroring the student's behavior. Are they reacting to anger, indifference, or hostility with the same emotion? Students' irrational behaviors have a strong negative impact on adults. Several ways to master the Conflict Cycle include:

- Become an expert at identifying the Conflict Cycle.
- Accept your counteraggressive feelings toward the student. Your feelings are an indicator of how the student is feeling.

- Choose not to enter into a power struggle with a student.
- Avoid the use of "You" messages. Use "I" messages. ("When I see behavior such as that, I get upset.", instead of "You are making me angry."). This avoids the student feeling defensive, allows the adult to vent feelings in an appropriate way, and provides a positive role model for the student.
- Use the student's feelings to focus on his/her needs instead of your feelings.
- Decode the student's behavior into feelings. (When I see behavior such as that, I can't help wondering if you are feeling sad.)
- Help the student make a connection between behavior, feelings, stress, and self concept.
- Help the student focus on managing stress, coping skills, the here and now, and self-worth. The ultimate goal is to help the student increase personal responsibility for behavior.

When a Conflict Cycle arises in the classroom, it is difficult to step out of it. For example, teachers often feel that they need to be in charge or "to save face" when a student acts disrespectful to a teacher. Teachers need a repertoire of skills to disengage themselves immediately from any Conflict Cycle. Often humor or a simple statement such as "I can see that you are upset, let's talk about this later" will help defuse a situation. Use strategies which do not promote power struggles, but ones which enhance self esteem, decrease stress, and allow students to learn -- the ultimate goal. Many times a trained professional can continue the discussion later using a technique called the Life Space Intervention, LSI, (Wood & Long, 1991). This is an excellent method to approach children in crisis. The goal of the technique is to help the child talk about and conceptualize the issues in the child's life and help the child develop a solution. This technique does require training and is time intensive. Regular educators should work cooperatively with special educators and mental health professionals to implement LSI. Brenner (1969) lists several points to assist adults when talking to children in crisis.

- Be polite. If you do not have control of your emotions, do not begin the discussion.
- Establish eye contact with the child. Sit, kneel, or stand. Talk with, never at, the child.
- If you are unsure of the history of the incident, investigate. Never conduct a discussion on the basis of second- or third-hand information or rumors.
- To obtain a knowledgeable grasp of the incident, ask appropriate questions. Avoid the use of "why" questions.
- Listen to the child. Attempt to comprehend the child's perception.
- Encourage the child to ask questions and respond appropriately.
- If the child suffers from shame or guilt as a result of the incident, attempt to reduce and minimize the feelings.
- Facilitate the child's efforts of communication. Help if the child experiences difficulty.
- Work carefully and patiently with the child to develop a mutually acceptable plan of action of immediate or future implementation.

Remember children who are emotionally disturbed display behaviors that are symptoms of their disability. There are many approaches to manage their behavior. Applied behavior analytic techniques are very successful because they provide a structure to deal with the behavior. Proponents of the psychodynamic theory believe children need to make the connection between their stress and feelings and their behavior for long-term solutions. Regardless of your affiliation, it is important that you avoid the Conflict Cycle because the child cannot.

This product, one of a series, was developed by Project Staff from the Department of Exceptional Education at SUC Buffalo under a grant from the New York State Education Department. No part of this product may be reproduced without permission from Project Staff.

Source: Curwin, R. & Mendler, A. (1995). Discipline with dignity Guide (pp. 25-30) in Strategies for reaching disruptive and angry students: Creating caring communities. Conference proceedings, Stowe, VT, July 1996. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service. Reprinted with permission.

Discipline with Dignity℠

"A classroom management approach that teaches responsible thinking, cooperation, mutual respect, and shared decision-making."

Participant's Resource Handbook

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Action Dimension

When students break rules, we recommend using the P.E.P. method of enforcing them.

P.E.P.

Proximity
Be as physically close to your students as possible when delivering a consequence.

Eye Contact
Make direct eye contact with the student when delivering the message. Be aware of cultural sensitivities and/or emotional issues which may make eye contact inappropriate.

Privacy
Make sure that the only person who hears your message is the student to whom it is directed.

Avoiding Power Struggles

Power Struggles Get Worse If Escalated

When the issue is dignity vs. dignity, it is impossible for either side to back down. As each side tries to win, they dig in deeper and fight harder, use more weapons and escalate the struggle.

Neither The Student Nor The Teacher Will Win

As the stakes get higher, it becomes more and more impossible for either party to feel like a winner regardless of how the original issue turns out. Because the game no longer includes the original issue, it is now based on dignity.

Use Active Listening

Active listening is a technique that can be used to diffuse the power struggle. When a teacher uses active listening, he neither agrees nor disagrees with the student, but rather acknowledges the student's remarks by paraphrasing it without judging it.

Agree To Speak With The Student Later

Usually when both parties are hot (full of emotion) it is very difficult to reach any sort of resolution. After the use of active listening, set up a time to speak with the student later.

Keep All Communication As Private As Possible

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The Use Of Active Listening And I-Messages

The Teacher…

- Must want to hear what the child has to say.
- Must genuinely want to be helpful to him at that time.
- Must be able to accept his feelings as they are.
- Must have a deep feeling of trust in the child's ability to handle his feelings, to work them through and to solve his own problems.
- Must appreciate that feelings are transitory, not permanent.
- Must see child as someone separate from self—a unique person who has his own feelings.

I-Messages

An I-Message is a dignified, clear way of expressing pleasant and unpleasant feelings/ thoughts to students. An I-Message contains three components…

- A statement of behavior directed to the student that is found to be objectionable (i.e., "When you threw that eraser").
- How you felt (i.e., "I felt upset and angry").
- Reason(s) for your feelings and/or expectations of better future behavior (i.e., "Because it disturbed the lesson" and/or "And I don't want to see that happen again").

Goals In Defusing Power Struggles

Dignity for the Student

Dignity for the Educator

Keeping the Student in Class

Teaching an Alternative to Aggression

Methods For Defusing Power Struggles

Listening

Acknowledging

Agreeing

Deferring

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Reframing

- Your choice of intervention is based on the name you give a student or his actions.
- Reframing is not condoning misbehavior; it is an effective way to change it.

Reframing Works Best...

- When you open doors, not close them.
- When you teach rather than police.
- When you lower the stakes.
- When you reaffirm that your student is welcome.

Nine Things To Say When Confronted

1. When did you start (feeling, thinking, believing) that? Tell me after class.
2. Have you always (thought, wondered, felt) that way? Your thoughts are important to me.
3. That's an interesting opinion. You might be right.
4. I'm glad you trust me enough to tell me how you feel. I'm concerned.
5. There's probably some truth to what you are saying. Right now you sound very upset and angry.
6. I don't see it that way. My view is .... But tell me more about what's on your mind.
7. You must be feeling very angry to say that to me in front of everyone. Let's talk later and see how we can solve the problem.
8. Let's talk later. I want to hear your side of the story.
9. (Name), that was funny, but I'm not sure if you meant it as a put down. Is that how you meant it?

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Power Struggles

Power struggles get worse if escalated. When the issue is dignity vs. dignity, it is impossible for either side to back down. As each side tries to win, they dig in deeper and fight harder, use more weapons and escalate the struggle. Neither the student nor the teacher will win. As the stakes get higher, it becomes more and more impossible for either party to feel like a winner regardless of how the original issue turns out. Because the game no longer includes the original issue, it is now based on dignity.

More On Power Struggles

1. Use active listening.
2. Take responsiblity for your part of the problem.
3. Modify the consequences to fit the circumstance.
4. Set a time later to meet with the student when things have "cooled down."

Usually when both parties are hot or full of emotion, it is very difficult to reach any sort of resolution. After the use of active listening, set up a time to speak with the student later.

5. Keep interaction as private as possible.
6. Provide an "out." Build an escape door for both you and the student.

When Rules Are Broken

State rule and consequence using P.E.P.

Ignore

Active listen - content

Active listen some more - feeling

Tell there's a power struggle (fight, argument) brewing and defer to a private time

Offer the door/temporarily give up control

Insubordination clause

Reconnect later with student

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BEHAVIORAL CRISES IN SCHOOLS

Some Intervention Strategies

Bill Keogh
May 11, 1996

BEHAVING PROFESSIONALLY MEANS...

...TO RESIST THE URGE TO RESPOND TO AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR WITH AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR. IT ALMOST ALWAYS SERVES TO ESCALATE AGGRESSION AND A BEHAVIORAL CRISIS.

...TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE TEND TO GET BACK THE SORT OF BEHAVIOR WE EMIT. IF WE ARE CALM AND FRIENDLY, WE TEND TO RECEIVE THIS FROM OTHERS IN RETURN. IF WE ARE CRANKY AND ALOOF, WE GET "LEFT ALONE"; AND, IF WE PROJECT AGGRESSION, WE GET AGGRESSION RETURNED.

...TO MAKE A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO PRACTICE BEING CALM WHILE UNDER STRESS EVEN IF WE ARE UPSET INSIDE.

...TO REMEMBER TO PROJECT A RESPECTFUL AND CARING ATTITUDE EVEN WHEN YOU ARE BEING SCREAMED AT BY A CHILD (OR COLLEAGUE)

...TO UNDERSTAND THAT MOST VERBAL/PHYSICAL OUTBURSTS DIRECTED AT YOU ARE NOT CALCULATED TO HARM YOU SPECIFICALLY BUT ARISE BECAUSE THE PERSON HAS LOST THE ABILITY TO THINK RATIONALLY. SUCH BEHAVIOR SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN PERSONALLY.

...TO BE AWARE OF HOW BODY LANGUAGE CAN PROJECT AGGRESSION AND POWER.

...TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS RELEVANT TO THE SITUATION IN A CORDIAL AND POLITE MANNER.

A Closer Look at Body Language and Other Things

Did you know... Studies show that 82 percent of a teacher's daily communications with students are nonverbal?

Did you know...research has shown that nonverbal classroom communication is more influential than the verbal component in maintaining task-related behavior?

Did you know...individuals have a personal comfort zone or space (about 2 feet) and intrusion into that zone can cause some students to feel threatened or anxious?

Did you know...facial expressiveness (smiling) by teachers has been shown to be more effective in maintaining task-relevant behavior among children in grades K-6 then verbal expressions of approval?

Did you know...by standing square to a student with your legs about two feet apart and your arms folded (or placed on your hips) is sometimes referred to as "the power stance" that sends the message, **"I am the boss here"**?

Did you know...standing 45 degrees to the right or left of a facing student (and with your hands visible) is referred to as a "supportive stance" which communicates that you are not trying to block the student from passing by? It is also a self-defense stance.

Did you know...it is punishing for some children to see teachers smile at, praise and make eye contact with "favorites" if they never receive similar treatment on occasion?

Did you know...tone of voice and cadence (yelling and sarcasm) can be extremely embarrassing for some children causing some to seek revenge and others to avoid interactions?

CRISIS PREVENTIONS AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

A WORKING DEFINITION OF CRISIS

CRISIS: A PERIOD OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL DISTRESS WHICH TEMPORARILY IMPAIRS A PERSON'S OR SYSTEM'S ABILITY TO COPE

WHAT IS A BEHAVIORAL CRISIS?

STUDENT LOSES SELF-CONTROL BY

...Threatening to injure others

...Threatening to injure self

...Threatening to destroy property

...Actual attempts of any of the above

STUDENT DISPLAYS EXCESSIVE VERBAL DISRUPTION BY:

...Prolonged Venting in a public place or when learning occurs (i.e., swearing and/or yelling).

What is the difference between "Ultimatums" and good "Limit Setting Techniques"?

This is an Ultimatum: "If you know what's good for you young man, you had better get out of the gym right now!" *DON'T USE ULTIMATUMS.*

These are good Limit Setting Techniques:

1. Explain *what* the inappropriate behavior is.
2. Explain *why* the behavior is inappropriate.
3. Offer reasonable choices or *alternatives*.
4. Remind student about Behavior Plan s/he negotiated. (NOTE: Students should be allowed to help design their own behavior plans.)
5. Allow the student time.
6. Be sure to enforce limits

PHASES OF A BEHAVIORAL CRISIS

1. Anxiety
2. Defensiveness
3. Information Seeking Questioning
   (Usually: “Why?”)
4. Challenge Questioning
5. Refusal
6. Venting
7. Intimidation
8. Tension Release

First Crisis Level and Intervention

ANXIETY LEVEL:
Any noticeable change in behavior. Student may be uncharacteristically withdrawn or hyperactive. Sometimes difficult to detect but if you know the student you will know if s/he is anxious.

INTERVENTION:

- Be supportive not punitive.
- Be aware of your body language
- Point out to the student that s/he seems upset and offer to talk.
- Use a calm voice.
- If appropriate, a touch can be comforting

Second Crisis Level and Intervention

DEFENSIVE LEVEL:
Student overreacts to routine directives or requests. Student suggests you are picking on him/her. Student may slam books or other things down. (Example: When asked to line up to get ready to leave the gym, student may ask angrily why you are always picking on him/her, facial expression may be cross, and movements may be abrupt and animated.)

INTERVENTION:

- Be directive. Point out what needs to be done and why.
- Offer choices or alternatives if there are any.
- Avoid threats or ultimatums.
- Allow time for students to choose.

Third Crisis Level and Intervention

QUESTIONING (Type 1) LEVEL:
This is an information seeking type question. Student may ask, "Why do I have to get out of the gym?" Student may use a loud and aggressive voice.
INTERVENTION:

- Provide the information called for in the question.
- Remain calm.
- Be supportive.
- Do not respond to an aggressive tone of voice with an aggressive tone.

Fourth Crisis Level and Intervention

QUESTIONING (Type 2) LEVEL:
This is a challenge-type question where the student is challenging your authority and even your integrity as an individual. Student may be intentionally or unintentionally attempting to switch the agenda from the directive (i.e., getting out of the gym) to a personal attack.
INTERVENTION:

- Re-direct the student back to the main issue.
- Don't get pulled into the power struggle by defending your authority or integrity.
- Point out the advantages of cooperating.
- Re-state the directive.
- Don't be threatening or aggressive.

Fifth Crisis Level and Intervention

REFUSAL LEVEL:
Student may feel trapped in a face-saving situation. S/he is angry and is losing the ability to think rationally.

INTERVENTION:

- State and set limits.
- Focus on boundaries.
- State advantages of behaving appropriately.
- State disadvantages of behaving inappropriately.
- Make sure limits are fair, easy to understand, and enforceable.
- Be aware of nonverbal behavior.

Sixth Crisis Level and Intervention

VENTING:
Student begins to yell and maybe swear. S/he has lost the ability to think rationally. Probably has forgotten what the main issue is. Cannot focus on your words or process long instructions.

INTERVENTION:

- Allow venting to occur for as long as possible. Often, a student calms down after such a release.
- Isolate the situation by inviting the student to move to a more private place. If this does not work, ask the cheerleaders (onlookers) to move away from the situation.
- Do not attempt to force the student to move unless venting is prolonged and disruptive to others. Only a team of trained staff should attempt to move a student against his/her will.
- Do not attempt to touch the student (even to comfort him/her)
- Remain calm and professional.

Seventh Crisis Level and Intervention

INTIMIDATION:
Student threatens self, others, or property; or, attempts to harm self or others or destroys property. Student is out of control.

INTERVENTION:

- Do not attempt sole physical intervention.
- A plan should be in place to call Crisis Intervention Team. Implement plan.
- Take all threats seriously.
- Know right way to defend yourself until Team arrives.

Eighth Crisis Level and Intervention

TENSION RELEASE:

Tension Release may happen immediately following the Venting Level or following the Intimidation Level. At this level, student begins to calm down. Muscles begin to relax. Rational thought returns. Student feels remorseful and may begin to cry, feel foolish, and be embarrassed. Student may think s/he is not wanted or welcome in the school.

- This is a critical intervention.
- Need to re-establish a rapport with the student as soon after the crisis as possible.
- Tell student that when you and s/he are less stressed you would like to get together and discuss what happened. How to be more effective if it ever happens again.
- This is a good time to begin processing what happened and planning the next steps in a supportive way.

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Banbury, M. & Hebert, C. (1992). Do you see what I mean? Body language in classroom interactions. *Teaching Exceptional Children (24)* (2), 34-38.

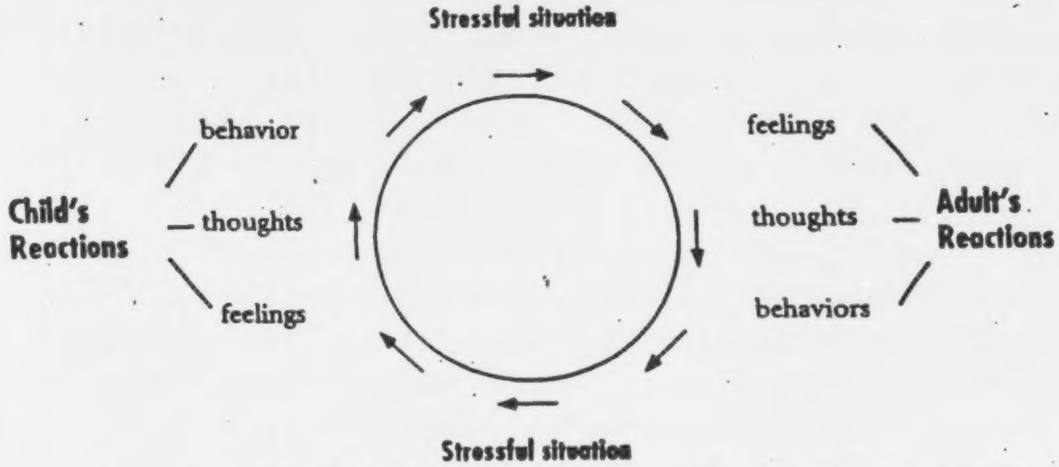
Source: National Education Service (1996). Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future: A facilitator's guide to the video series, p. 96. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service. Reprinted with permission.

DE-ESCALATING THE CONFLICT CYCLE

Adapted from the work of Nicholas Long, *Conflict in the Classroom*

How the Conflict Cycle works:

A stressful situation occurs. The stress causes feelings in a child. These feelings in turn create certain thoughts leading to some kind of behavior. The feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are the child's reaction. This reaction in the child can cause some adults to react in the same way. The untrained adult takes on the child's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Thus a child in stress can cause an adult who doesn't understand what is going on to feel, think, and act like that child.



Learning to deal with troubled children can become a way of life, not a bag of tricks. This way of life is founded on fair play, goodness, concern, respect for others and their property, and a conviction that it is possible to help a child grow.

Adults need to take responsibility for disengaging from the conflict cycle. They can do this when they

- are in touch with their own feelings
- are aware that negative, angry feelings were originally the child's
- verbalize their feelings
- decode the child's feelings
- support the child's feelings but not the inappropriate behavior
- acknowledge that they may need to reduce stress in their lives
- teach kids that life is not always fair
- recognize that a child may need professional help

Source: Preventing and responding to school disruption and violence: Recommendations and guidelines of the task force on school violence (pp. 5-6). Vermont Department of Education (1998). Montpelier, VT: author

Responding to Verbal and/or Physical Attacks: The Crisis Cycle and Counter-Aggression

(Note: The following information is based on the work of the Crisis Prevention Institute and Nicholas Long)

A crisis may be defined as a period of social, emotional and/or physical distress which *temporarily* impairs a person's ability to cope.

A behavioral crisis can involve verbal or physical aggression or both. Ample evidence exists to show that teacher behavior during the early phases of a behavioral crisis can promote escalation to more intense levels, or de-escalation to a calmer state. Research and experience show that the application of day-to-day management techniques (e.g. sending a student to time-out) are not only ineffective, but may actually make the crisis worse.

During a crisis, a student is likely to go through several distinct phases beginning with the verbal or nonverbal expression of anxiety and ending in what is called the tension release or recovery stage. Teacher behavior, from the onset through later phases leading to tension release and recovery, is critical. *Most importantly*, the adult must fully understand that responding to aggression with aggression only escalates the crisis.

When a student explodes following a reasonable request (e.g. to hand in an assignment), challenges a staff member's authority, is non-compliant, screams obscenities or threatens harm, it is clear that something is very wrong. Although it may be hard to believe, a student who behaves in these ways is extremely vulnerable. Responding with anger, threats, ultimatums etc. displays insensitivity to the student and escalates the crisis to higher levels of intensity and danger. Over time, such responses (called counter-aggression or righteous rage) cause the student's crisis behavior to increase in frequency, duration, intensity and danger and to become generalized to other environments.

The above doesn't mean that the adult isn't tense, afraid, upset or angry when experiencing a student's crisis behaviors. Rather it emphasizes the need for training and regular practice in professionally responding to such circumstances and behaviors. It is critical to learn how to depersonalize crisis behaviors, know the appropriate interventions at each stage of crisis and remain calm. Police officers, people who work at airline ticket counters and the gift return sections of department stores at holiday time, all learn and practice these skills in order to control their counter-aggression and de-escalate crisis behaviors. As educators, we must learn these skills also. They include but are not limited to the following:

1. Lower your voice.

2. Slow your rate of speech.

3. Stand 1 to 3 feet from a student who is acting out–give the student space.

4. Be aware of your body language and tone of voice.

5. Allow verbal venting.

6. Ignore irrelevant comments; direct the student back to the problem at hand.
7. Provide choices.
8. Use non-aversive physical intervention (restraint) as a last resort.
9. Once the student is calm, use the incident to teach alternative, appropriate ways to deal with aggression.

Summary of Effective Practices

The following list of effective practices summarizes and, in some ways, expands upon the preceding information. Schools that implement these proven methods are effective in meeting the needs of students who exhibit challenging behavior while simultaneously benefiting the entire school community.

Basic Practices

1. Establish strong administrative, school board and community support.
2. Promote family involvement based on family-centered practices.
3. Develop a multi-year strategic plan, based on core values, to which all other plans are connected.
4. Use curricula that address students' needs, interests, and talents.
5. Provide choices for students and families.
6. Develop students' critical thinking, creative problem-solving and decision-making skills.
7. Teach in ways that are engaging, inquiry-based, constructivist and cooperative.
8. Use interdisciplinary learning/teaching.
9. Meet student and adult needs for belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.
10. Develop collegiality through collaboration and the regular examination of learning/teaching.
11. Foster experimentation, high expectations, trust, appreciation and celebration.
12. Continuously reach out to the knowledge bases impacting learning/teaching.
13. Provide tangible support (i.e., time and resources) to accomplish tasks.
14. Develop a continuum of services vs. a continuum of placement.

Educational Opportunities and Options

1. Social skills, conflict resolution and peer mediation are learned and applied across the curriculum and practiced in real settings.
2. The community is an integral part of the classroom (including service, vocational, mentorship and apprentice programs).
3. Early literacy is emphasized.

School Culture and Environment

1. Students and adults exercise initiative, leadership and decision making in rule-making, educational content, methodology and assessment.
2. Professional development is provided in collaboration and creative problem-solving.
3. Consistent schoolwide behavior response and management systems exist.
4. Crisis prevention, response and management capacity exists.
5. Individual behavior response and management capacity exists.

Family/Community/School Collaboration

1. Home/school coordination is fostered.
2. Parent/school/community partnerships are developed.
3. Interagency coordination/collaboration exists.

Organization and Resources

1. Out-of-classroom learning environments are available.
2. Faculty and staff (including teaching assistants) work in teams for planning and support.
3. Access to behavior specialist(s) is available.

Unit 4 Activity Sheets

Responding to Challenging Behavior

PEP Scenarios

Example:

Setting: Students are seated in a circle. Situation: Two students are talking to each other as the paraeducator is circulating, checking seatwork. The paraeducator walks over to them, leans over privately, and says: "Girls, I know you are excited about the field trip tomorrow (acknowledgment), but we are doing our homework now. You're talking during work time (behavior and norm violation). I'd appreciate it if you'd focus on your work so it can be done before you go home (appropriate behavior). That way you'll be able to spend more time planning the field trip after school (alternative)."

1. Setting: Students are on the playground. Situation: One student is playing basketball and refuses to allow any other student to have the ball. You have been summoned to resolve this situation.

2. Setting: In the cafeteria line. Situation: You are on lunch duty. One student jumps in line in front of everyone else, and the other students begin complaining loudly.

3. Setting: In the hallway. Situation: You see two students sauntering down the hall wearing belt chains, which are forbidden.

4. Setting: In class, during a lecture. Situation: A student sits in the back of the room makes rude comments during the lecture.

5. Setting: Mathematics class. Situation: A student who does very poorly in math has just slammed his book shut, refused to do any work, and is mumbling under his breath.

Activity Sheet

Paraeducator Conflict Mediation Script

1. Introduce yourselves: "Hi, my name is ________."
2. Ask the parties: "Do you want to solve the problem with me or with the teacher?" If necessary, move to a quiet place to solve the problem.
3. Explain to the parties: "First, you have to agree to four rules":
    a. Agree to solve the problem.
    b. No name calling.
    c. Do not interrupt.
    d. Tell the truth.
4. Paraeducator #1 asks person #1: "What happened? How do you feel? Paraeducator #1 repeats what Person #1 says, using active listening: "So, what you're saying is..."
5. Paraeducator #2 asks person #2: "What happened? How do you feel?" Paraeducator #2 repeats what person #2 says, using active listening: "So, what you're saying is..."
6. Ask person #1: "Do you have a solution?" (May refer to the solution ideas below)
   Ask person #2: "Do you agree with the solution?"
   If no: "Do you have another solution?" and so on until disputants have reached a solution agreeable to both of them.
7. Have disputants tell each other what they have just agreed to: "So will you tell each other what you've agreed to?"
8. Congratulate them both: "Thank you for working so hard to solve your problem. Congratulations."

Solution Ideas

Share:	We can both do it
Take Turns:	We can do it your way this time, my way next time
Compromise:	Give up some—get some
Chance:	Flip a coin
Outside Help:	Let's ask a teammate, classmate, teacher
Postpone:	Later—when we cool down
Avoid:	Agree to disagree—with respect
Humor:	Is this important to Joe's turtle?

(adapted from Jones & Jones, 1998)

Unit 4 Forms

Responding to Challenging Behavior

- Knowledge Review
- Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary
- Unit Evaluation Form

Knowledge Review

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Site: ______________________________

Instructor: ______________________________

Directions: *Read each question and circle the letter corresponding to the one item that you think is the best answer.*

31. Some things paraeducators should know in order to respond to individual student behaviors include:
    a) the classroom expectations and rules regarding behavior
    b) students' learning and communication styles
    c) when and how to defer to the classroom teacher when responding to misbehavior
    d) all of the above
    e) a and b only

32. In an initial response to a misbehavior, a paraeducator should:
    a) ignore the misbehavior
    b) speak to the student calmly and privately
    c) reprimand him or her publicly
    d) warn the student about possible consequences

33. In the middle of a lesson, the best way to deal with power struggles is to:
    a) ignore the student
    b) try to win the argument at all costs
    c) allow the student to give reasons for the behavior
    d) acknowledge there is a problem and make a plan to resolve the problem outside of class

34. Which of the following is NOT a good idea after a student has engaged in a challenging behavior?
    a) demand immediate resolution and a public apology
    b) provide support during the difficult time so no one is harmed
    c) think of a creative way to engage the student in the activity at hand so teaching can continue
    d) assist the student in calming down

35. In order to prevent a challenging behavior from escalating and to avoid the conflict cycle, which of the following responses would be recommended?
    a) Insist on having the last word, you cannot lose face.
    b) Give the student a clear choice: "Either stop the behavior or be punished."
    c) Mimic the student so he/she understands what the behavior looks like.
    d) Speak calmly and directly to the student, say what the behavior is, that it is unacceptable and suggest an alternative.

36. Which of the following is **not** recommended when encountering a conflict between two students?
    a) Invite the disputants to a quiet, neutral area to work things out.
    b) Encourage them to take turns listening.
    c) Focus on common interests.
    d) Determine who is "at fault."

37. Why is punishment **not** a long-term effective solution for responding to misbehavior?
    a) It doesn't teach a better way to behave.
    b) Children often become more aggressive when in punitive settings.
    c) Punishment does not address the underlying reason for the behavior.
    d) The person applying the punishment becomes aversive to the student.
    e) all of the above.

38. When responding to misbehavior, what does PEP stand for?
    a) planning, energy, and practice
    b) proximity, eye contact, and privacy
    c) prediction, engagement, and punishment
    d) punishment, effectiveness, and professionalism

39. In a behavior crisis, behaving professionally means:
    a) keeping a hands-off approach
    b) making sure that your authority is not questioned
    c) forcing the student to be compliant
    d) resisting the urge to respond to aggression with aggression

40. If a student is exploding and out of control behaviorally, what generally happens if a paraeducator shows anger, and threatens the student (e.g., "I'll show him who's in charge here")?
    a) The student immediately understands the inappropriateness of the behavior and calms down
    b) The behavior escalates
    c) The probability of that behavior occurring again is decreased
    d) The student is able to change the behavior because he or she has been shown the limits.

Cooperating Teacher Practicum Summary

Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss the paraeducator's role in **responding** to the student's challenging behavior.

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher should review the reading by Curwin and Mendler located in the Participant's Manual, and select two strategies for responding to challenging behavior, which the paraeducator will demonstrate while working with an individual or group of students.

c) The paraeducator will record the strategies below, and the cooperating teacher will mark a check next to each strategy to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated that strategy.

Paraeducator's Response Strategies to Student's Challenging Behavior

____

____

____

____

____

Unit 4 Evaluation Form
Responding to Challenging Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Participant name (optional): ____________________ Date: ________________

Directions: Please check the box next to the statement that best reflects your opinion regarding the following questions.

1. How **important** were the objectives for this unit?
   - ☐ very important
   - ☐ important
   - ☐ somewhat important
   - ☐ not important

2. How **relevant** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

3. How **understandable** were the required readings for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

4. How **useful** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very useful
   - ☐ useful
   - ☐ somewhat useful
   - ☐ not useful

5. How **understandable** were the activities for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

6. How would you rate the **quality** of the materials for this unit?
   - ☐ very high quality
   - ☐ high quality
   - ☐ fair quality
   - ☐ poor quality

7. How **relevant** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very relevant
   - ☐ relevant
   - ☐ somewhat relevant
   - ☐ not relevant

8. How **understandable** were the practicum requirements for this unit?
   - ☐ very understandable
   - ☐ understandable
   - ☐ somewhat understandable
   - ☐ not understandable

9. What was the most important or useful thing that you learned from this unit?

10. Please use the rest of this page to make suggestions for improving the objectives, required readings, activities, and practicum requirements for this unit.

Practicum Requirements

Practicum Requirement
Unit 1: Understanding Student Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to review the individual student support plan (behavior plan) for a student with whom they work who has challenging behaviors (Note: The student who is chosen for this practicum requirement will also be the focus of the practicum requirements for Units 2, 3, and 4.)

b) The paraeducator will review the student support plan to identify the four primary components of the plan: target behaviors, prevention strategies, replacement behaviors, and response strategies. These components will be recorded on the following page.

c) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to identify his/her role in carrying out the components of the student support plan. The paraeducator and cooperating teacher may refer to the paraeducator's role regarding student behavior located in the reading "Understanding Student Behavior" by Backus in the Participant's Manual to help identify ways that the paraeducator may support positive behaviors.

d) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will identify and outline one role (identified above) that the paraeducator will focus on (e.g., to learn more about, to target for change, to define more clearly) for carrying out the student support plan. The paraeducator will record the role on the following page. The cooperating teacher will mark a check in the box above to indicate that the paraeducator has completed this practicum requirement.

Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ______________________

Cooperating Teacher: ______________________

(signature)

Date completed: ______________________

Student Support Plan

Target Behaviors: ______________________________

____

____

Prevention Strategies: ______________________________

____

____

Replacement Behaviors: ______________________________

____

____

Response Strategies: ______________________________

____

____

Paraeducator's Role for Carrying Out Components of the Student Support Plan: ______________________________

____

____

____

____

____

Practicum Requirement
Unit 2: Gathering Information about Challenging Behavior

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to identify a frequently occurring behavior (a behavior that happens more than once a day) of the student with behavior challenges who was chosen in the practicum requirement for Unit 1. The paraeducator will observe that behavior at least three times on the same day or over a period of time.

b) The observation should include three components: 1) a description of the chosen behavior; 2) a description of what happens **before** the behavior; 3) description of what happens **after** the behavior. The paraeducator will record the observation using the ABC Observation Data Sheet located in the Participant's Manual.

c) The paraeducator will summarize the observation data in a scatter plot format (refer to the Foster-Johnson & Dunlap, 1993, reading located in the Participant's Manual for an example of a scatter plot). This will require observing a student for part of each day over a three-day period, and writing down how frequently the student engages in the behavior in each of at least three classes.

d) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss results from the observation using the observation sheet and the scatter plot. The discussion may include suggestions for ways to improve data collection, factors that may contribute to the behavior (including what happens before and after the behavior), and patterns noted in the scatter plot summary. They should also discuss the best way to collect and report information about the behavior of students. The cooperating teacher will mark a check in the box above to indicate that the paraeducator has completed this practicum requirement.

Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ____________________

Cooperating Teacher: ____________________
(signature)

Date completed: ____________________

Practicum Requirement

Unit 3: Preventing Challenging Behavior and Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

Note: The paraeducator will choose **ONE** of the practicum requirements listed below to complete for Unit 3.

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss prevention strategies for the student with challenging behaviors identified in the practicum requirement for Unit 1.

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher should begin the prevention strategy with a review of the data collected in the practicum requirement for Unit 2. Next, the paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will review the **communicative function** of the behavior chosen in the practicum requirement for Unit 2.

c) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will use the support strategies for **preventing** problem behaviors (located in each of the required readings in Unit 3 of the Participant's Manual) to select the strategies that respond to the particular communicative function discussed in step "b" above.

d) The paraeducator will record the identified strategies for preventing problem behavior, which the paraeducator is responsible for helping to implement below. The cooperating teacher will mark a check next to the strategy to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated it.

Identified Strategies for Preventing Problem Behavior

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to review replacement behaviors for the behavior selected in the practicum requirement for Unit 2 (refer to the reading by Topper, Williams, Leo, Hamilton & Fox, "Example of Additional Skill Areas to Be Taught." Figure 6.1, located in the Participant's Manual).

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher will identify the paraeducator's role in supporting the replacement behaviors (e.g., modeling replacement behaviors, reinforcing replacement behaviors, helping the student to practice replacement behaviors).

c) The paraeducator will record his/her role in supporting replacement behaviors below, and the cooperating teacher will mark a check next to the role to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated that role.

Paraeducator's Role in Supporting Replacement Behaviors:

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Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ________________________

Cooperating Teacher: ________________________

(signature)

Date completed: ________________________

Practicum Requirement
Unit 4: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum

☐ a) The paraeducator will meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss the paraeducator's role in **responding** to the student's challenging behavior.

b) The paraeducator and the cooperating teacher should review the reading by Curwin and Mendler located in the Participant's Manual, and select two strategies for responding to challenging behavior, which the paraeducator will demonstrate while working with an individual or group of students.

c) The paraeducator will record the strategies below, and the cooperating teacher will mark a check next to each strategy to indicate that the paraeducator has demonstrated that strategy.

Paraeducator's Response Strategies to Student's Challenging Behavior

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Practicum requirements have been completed:

Student: ____________________

Cooperating Teacher: ____________________
(signature)

Date completed: ____________________

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